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Champion
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Voters ready to go to the polls

Mayor joins charity's celebrations

Primary school shortlisted for education Oscar

Members of the Hillside Young Explorers team celebrate their nomination

THE Early Years department at a Skelmersdale primary school has been shortlisted for the prestigious TES awards, the Oscars of the educational world.

Hillside Community Primary in Egerton has been nominated for its Young Explorers section which caters for two to five–year–olds.

The awards, which are in their seventh year, recognise outstanding contributions to education made by teams within the school sector.

Angela Aspinwall–Livesey, executive headteacher at Hillside, said: "We are absolutely delighted to be the only school shortlisted in Lancashire and one of only eight across the entire country. This is a testament to all the hard work and commitment from the teaching and non–teaching staff, governors and entire community. Our children are wonderful and we are full of praise for them all."

The grand finals of the awards will be held at the Grosvenor House Hotel, London on Friday, June 19.

DRUGS GANG MEMBERS JAILED

Organised crime ring 'brought violence to streets of Skelmersdale'

Report by **Henry James**

ELEVEN members of a Skelmersdale–based drugs gang have been sentenced to a total of more than 48 years in prison.

The 10 men and one woman were sentenced at Liverpool Crown Court having previously pleaded guilty to various offences.

The gang was charged as part of Operation Thorium, an investigation into drugs supply and associated violence by an organised crime group in Skelmersdale.

The court heard that each member of the gang had their own agreed role with the common purpose to supply cocaine, heroin and cannabis, often reinforced with threats of violence, in order to control the drugs market and establish a reputation.

Josh Viggars from St Helens, pinpointed as leader of the gang, was sentenced to a total of 12 years in prison after pleading guilty to conspiracy to supply cannabis, conspiracy to rob, conspiracy to commit burglary, and blackmail.

Detective Chief Inspector Kevin Mclean, who led the operation, said: "I am pleased with these sentences – they should send a clear message that we absolutely won't tolerate drug dealing and the violence which goes with it.

"Josh Viggars and his associates have blighted Skelmersdale for too long and I hope this reassures the people in this area that we will act on any information that is passed to us in order to make local communities safer.

Jamie Jones – jailed for 11 years

"No–one is untouchable and we will continue to use all the criminal and civil legislation at our disposal to put individuals such as this gang behind bars."

Brett Gerrity, senior crown prosecutor for Crown Prosecution Service North West said: "Joshua Viggars was the leader of this organised crime gang who brought drugs and new levels of violence to the streets of Skelmersdale. Telephone evidence showed how he recruited new members to the gang and instructed those lower down the chain to deal drugs and commit violent offences on his behalf.

"He conspired to steal from others and was prepared to use significant levels of violence. He also encouraged the gang to commit robberies and burglaries to pay drugs debts owed to him.

"Joel Dowling was instructed to assault a teenager on a bus in respect of a drug debt which was owed by the teenager's parents and not him and Jamie Jones had been involved in a robbery where a shotgun was brandished.

"The court heard that the gang had brought considerable unrest to the community, with members of the public so fearful of them that they avoided the area where they operated and local businesses were affected.

"The CPS and police are dedicated to tackling drugs gangs and will continue to work together to make our communities a safer place to live."

The other sentences were as follows:

Jamie Jones, 20, of Back School Lane, Skelmersdale was sentenced to 11 years in prison for conspiracy to supply heroin, cocaine and cannabis, two counts of conspiracy to rob, conspiracy to commit burglary, and robbery.

• *Continued inside*

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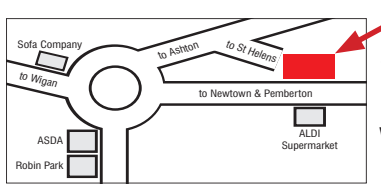

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Police launch new 'improved' website

By Henry James

LANCASHIRE Police have launched a new website which, they believe, will be more accessible and enable users to report crimes and incidents online.

The site is part of the force's on–going efforts to enhance the quality and availability of information provided to the public, with "significant" improvements to the design of pages and more content.

Other features include the capacity to translate into different languages using Google Translate; an improved help and advice section for victims of crime; crime prevention advice; and a section dedicated to recruitment, detailing different roles within the force.

Assistant chief constable, Mark Bates, said: "In today's society people expect to be able to get instant access to the information they want online at their fingertips and to 'self–service' online.

"We've seen our audience move from accessing our site on computers towards predominantly using tablets and mobiles. In response to this, our new site implements a responsive design so that we can offer all our users the best experience possible no matter what device they are using.

"Our new site is much easier to navigate and information can be quickly obtained through the improved search function. It also helps to answer many of the general questions that are directed to our force control room, with detailed 'frequently asked questions' on a number of topics, including motoring offences and missing people.

"On average we receive over 3,000 calls every day so it should play an important role in helping to reduce demand in some areas of our work."

Assistant chief constable Mark Bates

As well as enabling users to report non–emergency crimes and provide police with feedback online, the site will point them towards other organisations that can help on issues which are not usually a police matter, like noisy neighbours, parking and stray dogs.

And a new 'Join Us' section has been introduced for people wanting to apply for jobs online, along with a localised news section.

Over the coming months more information will be added to the site, including an events calendar to detail community meetings, bike coding events and more.

The new site uses the same URL of www.lancashire.police.uk.

To view the video, go to https://www.youtube.com/user/lancspolice.

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County's injunction 'first' in bid to smash gang culture

Report by **Henry James**

LANCASHIRE'S first full Gang Injunction Order has been handed to members of two rival gangs who have been repeatedly caught up in violence across West Lancashire.

The orders, introduced by the Home Office to try and break gang culture, prevent the men – aged between 20 and 31 – from going into certain areas and associating with each other, as well as other specific people.

The men caused havoc on various estates in Skelmersdale over a number of months by carrying out violent attacks against each other while vying for control of the illegal drug market.

Josh Viggars, 21, and Dylan Yates, 21, both from the Stockbridge Village area of Liverpool, Jeffrey Dillon, 21, from Old Skelmersdale and Jamie Jones, 20, from Ashurst, all part of the 'Toms Team' aka 'Canny Farm Heads' gang, were handed Lancashire's first full Gang Injunction Orders in December 2014. Adrian Moore, 30, from Huyton is currently subject to an interim order until December 19, 2015.

The orders are being publicised now after Viggars, Yates, Dillon and Jones were jailed for various drugs offences at Liverpool Crown Court.

Rival gang members Stephen Hind, 31, and David Hind, 26, both of Tanhouse, Skelmersdale, Martin Wade, 22, formerly of Tanhouse but now living outside of Lancashire, and Jamie Bamber, aka Hitchcock, 24, also of Tanhouse, all part of the 'Hinds' gang, were also given full Gang Injunction Orders at the end of March.

Jamie Bamber is currently wanted in connection with an assault and breach of his Gang Injunction Order.

All the orders were granted at Liverpool County Court after Lancashire Constabulary

Adrian Moore

submitted various police officer statements, police incident logs and accounts from members of the local community.

Moore, Yates and Viggars are now banned from West Lancashire and Stockbridge Village, while Dillon and Jones are banned from the Tanhouse area of Skelmersdale.

The 'Hinds' gang are all banned from a large area of West Lancashire unless they have prior consent from Lancashire Constabulary's chief constable.

Under the terms of the conditions all the men are prevented from being in specified public places between 10pm and 6am, associating with anybody under 18 (excluding immediate family members) and being in a vehicle with two or more other males in specified areas (excluding immediate family members).

They are also banned from being in possession of any knife or bladed article or imitation firearm in a public place; owning more than one mobile phone and wearing clothing that covers their faces.

Detective Chief Inspector Kevin McLean said: "This is a first for Lancashire Constabulary and shows our absolute commitment to tackling gang–related crime. We're keen to pursue all avenues which allow us to target any individual causing problems within our communities and we will increasingly look to Gang Injunction Orders as a way of putting an end to criminal activity.

"A gang injunction against a select number of the most prevalent gang members will enable police to break the cycle of gang membership and any associated criminality.

"The orders mean the gang members can no longer associate with each other and a number of other people, as well as restricting the tools of their trade.

"Local officers are aware of these restrictions and will take firm action if they see anyone breaching their injunction. However, we would also encourage members of the public to contact us if they also witness or know of any breaches."

Adrian Moore, 30, from Huyton, is currently serving a 36–week prison sentence after breaching an Interim Gang Injunction Order.

The eight others will be subject to their Gang Injunction Orders for two years. Any breaches can result in that person being given a prison sentence of up to two years and/or a fine.

In order to secure the injunctions, officers from Lancashire Constabulary's Operation Nemesis team have worked closely with Merseyside Police, West Lancashire Borough Council and other partner agencies.

Operation Nemesis is a dedicated unit responsible for addressing gang–related issues within the force by not only targeting offenders but diverting individuals away from this damaging way of life.

Members of drugs ring get combined jail sentences of more than 48 years in total

• continued from Page 1

Thomas Melville, 20, of Castlehey, Skelmersdale, six years prison for conspiracy to supply cocaine and cannabis.

Colin Pearson, 19, of Castlehey, Skelmersdale, five years prison for conspiracy to supply cocaine and cannabis.

Andrew Madden, 20, of Castlehey, Skelmersdale, four–and–half years prison for conspiracy to supply heroin.

Jeffrey Dillon, 21, of Thornby, Skelmersdale, three years prison for being concerned in the supply of cannabis.

Blaine Thomson, 19, of Castlehey, Skelmersdale, three years prison for conspiracy to supply cannabis.

Samantha Brogan, 41, of Flordon, 32 months prison for possessing heroin with intent to supply.

Dylan Yates, 21, of Stockbridge Village, 12 months prison for conspiracy to supply cannabis.

David Evans, 25, of Feltons, Skelmersdale, eight months in prison suspended for two years for possessing cannabis with intent to supply.

James Kieran, 21, of Beechtrees, Skelmersdale pleaded guilty to allowing premises to be used to produce cannabis and sentenced to 250 days in prison but was free to leave to court having spent time on remand.

"I'm still standing!"

UKIP candidate's election pledge – despite suspension

By **Danielle Thompson**

THE UKIP candidate for West Lancashire in the General Election on Thursday (May 7) says he will still stand – despite being suspended by his party just days before the poll for an alleged racist comment.

Jack Sen was suspended by UKIP after a Tweet was sent to Jewish Liverpool Wavertree Labour candidate Luciana Berger from one of his four social media accounts last Thursday (April 30) which read: "Protect child benefits? If you had it your way you'd send the £ to Poland/ Israel."

The comment caused UKIP chiefs to immediately suspend Mr Sen saying it "in no way reflects the views of the party" or their other "dedicated candidates."

However, Mr Sen claims that the post was written by one of a team of helpers delegated to tweet on his behalf.

And he added that, while he disagrees with the comment, he will not contest his suspension as he believes it is part of a strategy by UKIP to win more seats in the south.

He also claimed that UKIP party chiefs believe Labour candidate Rosie Cooper is more likely to win the seat and that he

Jack Sen

is being "thrown under a bus" to make the party look better to southern voters.

He believes his suspension will be lifted – but only if he wins the seat.

He told the Champion: "Although I'm temporarily suspended from UKIP, I am still certainly representing UKIP on the ballot at the General Election."

A spokesperson for UKIP said: "Jack Sen has been suspended pending further investigations and as a result is still standing for the party although his future with the party is uncertain until matters are fully resolved."

Alison Thomson, bank manager in TSB Skelmersdale (middle) handing over presentation cheque to Twinkle House. Code NA

Bank staff and customers raise £615 for charity

STAFF and customers at a Skemersdale bank have raised more than £600 for a local charity.

The TSB in The Concourse raised a grand total of £615 for their Local Charity Partner, Twinkle House, by holding a raffle and by two members of staff being sponsored to run 40 miles each to and from their home to work.

Tinkle House, based in Gorsey Place, East Gillibrands, provides personalised support for children and young people up to 19 years of age with disabilities and additional needs.

work 4TSB's partners and customers in Skelmersdale have raised £615 for their local charity partner, Twinkle House, by holding a charity raffle – and two colleagues ran 40 miles each, to and from work.

Alison Thomson, branch manager at TSB in Skelmersdale said: "Twinkle House is a vital part of our local community and we're really proud to have them as our Local Charity Partner. Our team in TSB Skelmersdale has put in a lot of time and dedication to raise money for Twinkle House.

"We enjoyed doing the raffle and helping the two members of our team get ready for their run. It's fantastic to know the difference that our efforts will make."

Jill Boardman, chief executive of Twinkle House, said: "We are hugely grateful to TSB and its local partners in Skelmersdale.

"The money they are raising and the general support we're getting is helping us to deliver really important services in Skelmersdale. Having major businesses like TSB supporting us locally is a great way of making our community stronger."

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Six candidates bidding to be borough's MP

Report by **Henry James**

Residents of West Lancashire will be casting their votes in the General Election and local elections on Thursday

SIX candidates will be bidding to woo the voters of West Lancashire when the borough, along with the rest of the UK, goes to the polls in the General Election tomorrow (Thursday, May 7).

Labour's Rosie Cooper will be bidding to secure a third term of office.

Having succeeded Colin Pickthall in 2005, when she had a majority of just over 6,000, Ms Cooper held on to the seat in the face of a strong challenge by the Conservatives' Adrian Owens in 2010.

Many experts had pinpointed West Lancs as a possible Tory gain but Ms Cooper held on to win by 4,343 votes over her nearest rival.

The Conservative candidate this time is local councillor and former Mayor of West Lancashire, Paul Greenall.

Councillor Greenall, who lives in Westhead and works for the NHS, has served on the local authority for 14 years.

He is bidding to win the seat for the Tories for the first time since 1987 and among his election pledges is to see money invested in the borough's town centres.

Also contesting the seat are Jack Sen (United Kingdom Independence Party), Daniel Lewis (Liberal Democrats), Ben Basson (Green Party) and David Braid (Independent).

UKIP candidate Mr Sen made the headlines when he received death threats, including two sent to the Champion.

He was involved in more controversy at the weekend when he was suspended by UKIP folowing an alleged racist Tweet sent from his Twitter account to a Labour candidate in another constituency.

Green Party candidate Mr Basson is a lifelong resident of the borough and works as a countryside ranger, while Liberal Democrat hopeful Mr Lewis is a councillor in neighbouring Southport.

The West Lancashire constituency was established in 1983 following the abolition of the former Ormskirk seat whose MPs had included Harold Wilson, who later went on to serve as Prime Minister from 1964 to 1970 and 1974 to 1976, and Robert Kilroy–Silk who went on to become a TV presenter.

As well as the General Election, residents in the borough will also be casting their votes in 18 West Lancs Council wards with more than 60 candidates standing, as featured in the Champion on April 22.

The current make–up of the council is Labour 27 councillors, Conservative 26 and Our West Lancashire one.

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Palace date for youth work stalwart Alan

Report by **Henry James**

A DEDICATED youth worker who was awarded an MBE in the New Year's Honours List will travel down to London to receive the coveted gong at Buckingham Palace next Friday, May 15.

Alan Lewis was nominated for his work with young people in Skelmersdale and the community over the past 27 years.

He said: "Being nominated and being found eligible for this award was a great honour for myself and my family.

"I am pleased to receive this award for the work I have done with young people in Skelmersdale, other members of the public and the wider Lancashire area."

He will be accompanied to the ceremony by members of his family, including his wife, daughter, son–in–law and granddaughter, who are all looking forward to the day at the palace where Alan will receive his investiture from a member of the royal family.

Alan has been running youth clubs in Skelmersdale since 1988 when he started his first club for seven to 11–year–olds.

Alan Lewis from SAY

He then moved on to running Skelmersdale Action for Youth (SAY) in 1998 with a team of young volunteers for young people age nine to 16 years–old from across the town running positive activities for young people and older people.

Since taking up the role Alan reckons he has worked with more than 55,000 participants over the years.

SAY has also run a number of conferences on subjects, including anti bullying for youths and adults and anti–social behaviour, which resulted in a DVD for use by schools.

Skelmersdale Action for Youth was nominated for and reveived the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2010

The group's current activities include drama, skateboarding sessions, visits to Go APE, residential weekends away, canoeing, swimming, keep–fit, turfboarding and sledging.

Alan said: "None of the projects would have been possible without the support of agencies like the Artz Centre, the police, the community safety partnership, the Fire & Rescue service, Crown Prosecution Service, Age UK, Evergreen Hub and the Young People's Service.

"A big thank–you goes to all the above agencies for all their hard work and support over the years and to Garry Woods for nominating me.

"I would also like to thank Inspector Sue Swift, Stacey Davis of the CPS, Councillor John Baldock and Dave Ashley for writing supporting letters which enabled me to receive the MBE.

"And thanks also to all who have taken the time to come up to me on the Concourse and other places to congratulate me. And most of all a big thank–you to the young people of Skelmersdale."

… and royal appointment for Annette too!

Report by **Henry James**

A FORMER librarian from Skelmersdale has been invited to the final of a competition which aims to promote literacy among youngsters.

Annette Barnes, who was head librarian at Up Holland library and is now a trainee accountant, volunteered to be a judge in the BBC's 500 Words competition in which children aged 13 and under are asked to write an original work of fiction of less than 500 words.

Now she has been chosen to attend the final on Friday, May 29 at St James's Palace in London followed by a reception attended by the Duchess of Cornwall and TV and radio presenter Chris Evans.

Annette, who has been a judge of the competition for two years, is one of 25 judges selected to go to the prestigious event.

She said: "We are sent a batch of around 30 stories from different parts of the country and have to judge these against a set of criteria, such as originality and character development."

Annette Barnes

The 34–year–old, a lifelong lover of poetry and books, is delighted to be chosen for the trip to the palace – even if it means an early start!

She has to be at the palace for 6am for the Chris Evans Breakfast Show as the event will be broadcast live but she said: "I was thrilled to be selected to attend the palace as there are only 25 judges selected. I am so excited to have the chance to go inside a real palace and meet the Duchess of Cornwall."

And she added: "I spent a brilliant two years at Up Holland library aiming to inspire children to read and providing community events to help the library to continue to be a well–used and loved resource in the local community.

"I have always loved books from a very early age and remember my dad bringing home a book on pay day for me. I think it is very important to have people to inspire and encourage reading for pleasure in young people and I do the same for my own children now.

"Reading is extremely important as it covers every single aspect of our lives. That's why our public libraries are so important – you can borrow virtually any book every written on any topic through the library service and it is also free, meaning that every member of the community can access it."

The cross–country champions from St James' school

Champion effort!

PUPILS from St James Catholic Primary School are celebrating after being crowned Skelmersdale and Up Holland Primary Schools cross country champions.

In a tense finale to the annual event at Lathom High School, organised by the West Lancs Schools Sports Partnership, the four–girl team from the school in Ashurst Road clinched the title by a single point from their joint second–placed nearest rivals.

St James' headteacher, Dave Ilif, said: "It was a fantastic effort. There were no Year 6 pupils in our team and one of the girls had not even competed in the cross country championship before."

Ian Donaghy is pictured (left) at the care home

Dementia expert holds second training date for care home staff

AN expert in dementia has given a second training session to staff at a Skelmersdale care home.

Ian Donaghy, award–winning director of Training for Carers and author of the book 'Dear Dementia: The Laughter and Tears', gave the session at a local community centre for staff at the Birch Green home in Ivydale.

They were joined for the session by Asda's local community liaison officer, Sharon – a great supporter of Birch Green – and a family member of one of the residents.

Staff joining the class, which included relevant topics such as person–centred care and effective communication, were new to Ian's training and were keen to get involved.

Carol Nickeas, general manager of Birch Green, said: "Everyone involved had a great time and learnt a lot from Ian. We're very lucky to have established a great relationship with a leading expert in the field, and we're always keen to learn about the latest techniques and trends in dementia care.

"It was fantastic to involve others in the training session too – something we're keen to build on and do more of in the future."

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Village heritage group seeks sporting memories

LOCAL sporting memories will be the focus of the next meeting of the Burscough Heritage Group on Monday, May 11.

The group is inviting villagers to go along to the event, Your Sporty Memories of Burscough, to share their own recollections.

Following the success of the group's March meeting when local biscuit bakers were recalled, they are seeking memories of local sporting events ranging from football, cricket, tennis and archery to pigeon racing, bowls and darts.

Members of the public can also take along items of sporting memorabilia such as photos, tickets, programmes, shirts, scarves, results sheets etc.

The meeting starts at 7.30pm at the The Blue Mallard on Burscough Wharf and a £2 donation will be requested on the door.

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Pupils get a 'taste' of history

Year 6 pupils at Tarleton Holy Trinity Primary – suitably attired – take part in a game of hopscotch during their day as Second World War evacuees.

PUPILS at a West Lancashire School enjoyed a history lesson with a difference when they took part in a project that aimed to recreate what life was like for young evacuees during the Second World War.

Year 6 students at Tarleton Holy Trinity CE Primary dressed up in typical clothing of the day, sampled the food likely to have been available and hid under their desks to simulate taking sheltered from an air raid.

Headteacher, Stephen Smith, told the Champion: "Our teachers are always looking at ways in which to bring the curriculum alive and this term has been no exception. Children from Year 6 have been experiencing what it must have been like to be an evacuee for the day. As well as dressing in World War Two–style clothes for the day, they played traditional games, hid under the tables during an 'air raid' and even tasted bubble and squeak and spam fritters for lunch.

"Days like these really bring the curriculum alive and will hopefully give the children an experience that they will remember for years to come."

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Chance to swap your slippers for trainers!

Running pals offer free training programme for beginners

Report by **Henry James**

IF you want to swap a sedentary lifestyle for a fitter regime but don't know where or how to start – help could be at hand.

Friends Barry Ryder, from Skelmersdale, and Paula Keating, from Lathom, have set up a free running group for people who might want to take part in events such as fun runs etc. or just get a little bit fitter.

Barry and Paula are both members of Skelmersdale Boundary Harriers but stress that the new group, called Get Up and Run 5k, is not aimed at would–be competitive runners.

The pals started the group in February, meeting on Thursday evenings at 6pm at West Lancashire College, and are just about to start a new nine–week course on Thursday, May 7.

Barry said: "The first programme was attended by about 12 people. We were really surprised by how many people turned up, we had only expected a few, but everyone was really up for it. Some had never done any running but they all kept up.

"The sessions are open to young people and adults but we ask that anyone under 16 is accompanied by an adult.

"We follow the NHS Couch to 5k phone app. Up to now it has gone really well and we make sure no–one is left behind. We won't throw anyone in at the deep end.

"It's a week–by–week programme. As the weeks progress there's less walking and more running."

The 26–year–old, who has been running for three or four years, added: "To join the harriers you have to be able to run five miles but we decided to start the group for people who are taking part in charity events to enable them to run instead of walk."

About 15 members of the group recently completed the Ormskirk 5k and medals are provided for anyone who completes the programme."

For more information go to the club's Facebook page, Get Up and Run 5k.

Barry Ryder (back right) and Paula Keating (standing left with cap) get set for a training run

Reunion planned for Tawd Vale High School leavers of 81

Report by **Henry James**

DO you know what you were doing when Prince Charles married Lady Diana Spencer in July 1981?

Well, if you'd just left the former Tawd Vale High School you are invited to a grand reunion get–together.

The event is the brainchild of former pupil Jess Taylor (nee Munro) who is inviting anyone who left the school that year or any former teachers who were there at the time, to attend a reunion at the Old Toby pub in Ashurst on Friday, June 5.

Jess, whose sister Julie is also helping with the organisation, said: "Anyone who left Tawd Vale High in 1981 will be welcome.

Chat

"Even if you weren't in that year yourself but were friends of people who were, then please come along.

"Tawd Vale High is now Lathom and it looks exactly the same.

"There won't be a buffet on the night but there will be a mini School Tuck–Shop at the bar and we are planning a hot food stand outside."

Jess is also hoping there may still be some retired teachers in the area who would like to attend.

"Although we think that some may have left the area we want as many people as possible to come.

"There will be no charge, but we are asking people to contribute.

"People have started to chat about the reunion on Facebook, where we have set up a reunion page, saying they think it would be great to have a school reunion."

Jess Taylor (nee Munro) is pictured (right) old school friend Tina McMurray

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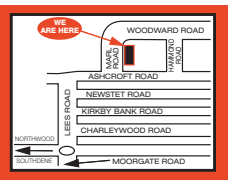

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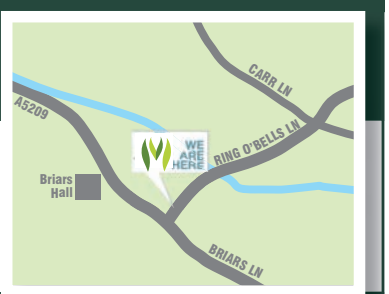

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Call for dance groups to sign up for festival

ORGANISERS of the annual Ormskirk Dance Festival are calling on local groups to sign up for this year's event.

The Divine Days Community Art project, which aims to make the arts accessible to all, including the most vulnerable in the community, has teamed up with West Lancs Council to host the event in Coronation Park, Ormskirk on Saturday, July 4.

Based in Burscough and Skemersdale, the project was founded by Katie Whitehead, who runs therapeutic and educational programmes for individuals with additional needs, including creative dance and drama workshops.

Members of the project's dance group, the Divine Dancers, who rehearse at the Greenhill Community Hub in Old Skelmersdale, have joined forces with the council to stage the free event which will run from noon until 4pm.

As well as groups showcasing a variety of styles, from traditional morris dancing to street dance, the festival will feature a funfair, bouncy castle, face–painting, craft and community stalls, and entertainment including a brass band.

Katie Whitehead said: "We are proud to be heading up this year's Ormskirk Dance Festival in conjunction with the council and West Lancashire Rangers Service, hope to see many local dance groups and projects wanting to get on board board with our award–winning dance company."

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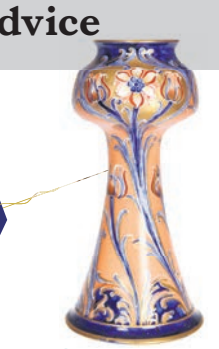

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Sports park hosts new programme to tackle men's mental health problems

THE JMO Sports Park in Skelmersdale is one of four centres chosen to host an innovative programme using football terminology to help men of all ages who may be experiencing mental health problems – including depression, stress and anxiety.

The Goal Difference programme, set up by Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust's Mindsmatter team, leads the 'players' (service users) through 11 weekly 'matches' (sessions) looking at different techniques that can be used to help improve their overall health and wellbeing.

The programme is held at the state–of–the–art JMO football centre at Blaguegate Playing Fields, Liverpool Road, Skelmersdale once a week and teaches various Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) techniques to help the 'players' understand their thoughts and help them work towards improving their mental health.

Ian Connor, psychotherapist at Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust and one of the course leaders for the Goal Difference programme in West Lancashire, said: "We find that men are the most difficult demographic to reach when it comes to providing help for people experiencing mental health difficulties, as they can be reluctant to seek help for a variety of reasons, including stigma around the illness.

"The Goal Difference programme provides a safe place where men of all ages can get together and each week learn different skills to help improve their mental health.

Report by **Henry James**

"We are extremely thankful to JMO for providing us with a place to hold the sessions. It is a great location which moves away from a more traditional clinical setting and helps bring the programme to life."

After each session, the 'players' are asked to set some goals, be it daily or weekly, that will help increase their confidence and overall wellbeing.

Charlie Haynes, manager at JMO, said: "It's great to be able to support the Goal Difference programme and work with Ian and the team to promote awareness of such an important issue regarding men's health.

"It's especially pleasing that we are able to provide an appropriate environment considering that the vast majority of our customers are male. As a venue, we are always looking to work with local community groups and we hope the programme can continue to develop as a result of this partnership."

The Mindsmatter service, previously known at the Improving Access to Psychological Therapy (IAPT) team, is a dedicated team of psychological wellbeing practitioners, cognitive behaviour therapists and counsellors offering a range of support to over–16s to help reduce depression, stress and anxiety and improve overall wellbeing.

For more details ring 01695 588254 or go to www.lancashirecare.nhs.uk/Mindsmatter.

Nomination deadline extended for design awards scheme

THERE is still time to nominate a building for this year's borough council's design awards scheme after the deadline was extended to Friday, May 29.

The 2015 West Lancashire Design Awards aim to acknowledge and promote the importance of good quality development and building design and show how this can greatly improve their local environment and contribute to a sense of place.

Judging will be in five categories – new residential developments; the conversion of existing buildings; commercial developments; sustainable building design; and landscaping proposals.

Awards will be given for designs which contribute to the overall quality of the borough and will focus on community, economic and environmental regeneration and the use of sustainable building techniques. Designs must have been completed after June 2013 to be eligible for entry.

John Harrison, West Lancs Council's assistant director of planning, said: "The council is committed to encouraging good design throughout the borough and the awards are a great way to celebrate distinctive, high–quality development here in West Lancashire."

Nomination forms are available from local libraries, the customer service points in Derby Street, Ormskirk, and The Concourse, Skelmersdale, or by emailing Ian Bond, heritage and environment manager, at ian.bond@westlancs.gov.uk or calling 01695 585167.

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Cloudy2Clear service the Crosby, Litherland, Aintree, Maghull, Walton, Anfield, Netherton, Bootle, Formby, Ormskirk and Skelmersdale areas & Paul is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. *'The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.'*

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6 Pieces Chicken with 2 Fries	£7.10
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EXTRAS

	Reg	Lge
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Cheese and Chips	£1.80	£2.40
Onion Rings	£1.80	£2.20
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Chicken, Chips and Cheese		£2.50
Chips, Cheese and Beans		£2.40
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Chicken Nuggets and Chips		£4.10
Potato Wedges		£1.80
Hot Wings (9) and Chips		£4.10
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Mayor joins charity's anniversary party

The mayor cuts the anniversary cake with West Lancs Positive Living chair Alison Tupling and manager Kath McKinstry

MAYOR of West Lancashire, Councillor Doreen Stephenson, was among the guests at a milestone event for a family–led charity which supports adults with learning disabilities.

Members of West Lancs Positive Living celebrated the organisation's 10th anniversary with a party at Skelmersdale Cricket Club – complete with buffet, disco and raffle – for all the users of the service, plus their parents, carers and support staff.

There was also an interactive display, based on the West Lancs Positive Living logo, inviting guests to write about 'what they like and admire about Positive Living.'

There was also a chance to enjoy a nostalgia look back at photos of the charity take during the last 10 years.

Chair of the charity, Alison Tupling, said: "West Lancs Positive Living was set up in February 2005 by parents and carers who wanted to provide the best possible services for their sons and daughters with learning disabilities and others like them.

"We provide support using personalised budgets and offer a range of activities that enable parents to take a break and people with a learning disability to lead a full life and gain confidence and independence. We also support people in Supported Living.

"Since our inception we have used a person–centred approach – which was unique at the time – and we continue to do so."

For more information on West Lancs Positive Living call 01695 711241 or visit www.westlancspositiveliving.org.uk.

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Champion LETTERS to the Editor

CHAMPION NEWSPAPERS
Clare House, 166 Lord Street, Southport, PR9 0QA
Telephone 01704 392 400
editor@champnews.com

Don't frack Halsall – or anywhere else!

IT has been a steep learning curve from when I first heard about fracking ('Drilling and hydraulically cracking the rock under people's homes? – Ah, they would never allow that!') to finding out that our local area (Formby, Halsall, Aughton, Maghull, Melling, Netherton, Thornton, Little Crosby and Crosby) is already mapped out as licence area PEDL164 and the licence sold off to a company who want to start fracking in Halsall, with 'seismic testing' on its way.

The government tells us it's safe, but what about the chemicals (so far undisclosed) that will be pumped into the ground and where will they end up – in the groundwater?

How much water will each drill site use? Billions of gallons, even in times of drought?

What about the vast amounts of toxic waste and contaminated water – including radioactive substances – that will be brought to the surface, where is it going?

What about the air pollution from heavy trucks and flaring and the risk of earth tremors and subsidence. Who would want to insure our houses? And what about house prices?

Full–scale production needs a widespread network of drill sites, what about our green belt, landscape, tourism? Who would want to holiday near a gas field?

Once the farmland is contaminated who will want to buy food from our area?

It would appear that our government is a puppet to big companies and financial interests. It is happy to sacrifice prime farmland, areas of natural beauty and our local communities to short–lived, narrow–minded profiteering.

Despite having made a commitment to counteract climate change, our government is willing to rip open and squeeze our planet for the last drop of fossil fuel, whatever the price.

We need a government that looks after and respects its people, in particular our children. It's the future generations who have to deal with the aftermath.

We need a government that treats our planet responsibly by developing renewable energy (wind/wave/tides/biomethane). Protecting the planet is protecting our children.

Elisabeth Cleary,
by email

Pity more Brits don't have a talent for complaining

IS the sentence 'I can only apologise' the mantra that companies train their customer service employees these days?

We, the British, are not renowned for complaining, we just usually moan about things rather than kick up a fuss when a service provider or any company let us down.

I am different. If I believe that a company is taking me for a ride or basically has a 'I have got his money now stuff him' mentality, I will complain.

But over the last couple of years this 'I can only apologise' seems to be the only reply you get.

In the last 12 months I have taken issue with my local chemist three times in a month, as well as Sky, Amazon and Manchester Airport.

They all tell you that they will investigate the matter as they take customer complaints very seriously....blah, blah, blah.

After their so called investigations you either get a letter (rarely) or more usually an email with those famous four words 'I can only apologise' case closed.

I believe it's about time that the British people say enough is enough.

But, sadly, it won't happen – they are all too busy watching Britain's Got Talent!

**James Riley,
Skelmersdale**

PICTURE of the week

www.champnews.com/pixonline

If you go down to the trains today: Teddy bears and their owners were in for a steam filled fun afternoon when West Lancashire Light Railway held one of their special events at Hesketh Bank last Sunday.

We want to hear your views...

IF you've got a point of view about a topic of local or national interest, we want to hear from you.

Letters to the editor should be concise – preferably no more than 350 words – and should include the name, address and a contact telephone number or email address of the sender for the purpose of clarification, although not necessarily for publication.

Submissions, marked 'Letters to the editor', can be sent or handed in to Champion Newspapers, Clare House, 166 Lord Street, Southport PR9 0QA or emailed to editorial@champnews.com.

Please note that the editor reserves the right to edit all items submitted for favour of publication.

Sad that so few fly the flag of St George on our national day

ANOTHER St George's Day has passed with only a hint, from some more patriotic members of the public, to show their support for England's patron saint, by flying the cross of St George from a flagpole or car window.

Some even sported our national flower, the red rose, on their clothes, but they were the 0.1% of us who bothered to make some sort of effort to celebrate April 23.

I found it all a bit sad really, feeling we should make more of an effort to show our patriotism.

Our non–show, does not mean that we, the public, are not proud of our heritage, we are as proud as the next person I'm sure, but we just do not exhibit it.

You would think as we watch or take part in the singing of 'Rule Brittania' at the last night of the 'Proms', that we are proud to be English.

But when it comes around to our National Day, where are the red roses or the flags of St George?

Nowhere to be seen is the answer.

Of course, there were flags flying from churches (St Andrew's Maghull was one) and no doubt town halls as well.

Maybe next year, we can show our loyalty to this country by coming out and wearing a red rose, flying the flag or simply by wearing a badge on our coats.

Dave Hughes,
Lydiate

Roads row rumbles on

SO the road repairs story rumbles on and we have another person writing about this problem.

Mrs Maureen Hughes (Letters, April 22) is quite right in what she says.

If this lady, or Bobbie Perry (Letters, March 25) would like my address I suggest they contact the Champion and I would be happy to have a one–to–one chat.

Mr G. Whittaker, Aughton

Four–year–olds should not face threat of being labelled failures

IN the last couple of weeks lots of parents of four–year–olds will have recieved notification of their primary school place for September, 2015.

However, how many of them are aware of what will face their four–year–old in the first couple of weeks of nursery?

That's if their chosen school decides to opt in to the baseline tests this September which are complusory from September, 2016.

Their child will be withdrawn on a one–to–one basis by the class teacher and tested in a formal situation.

The 'questions' are a yes or no answer, so it's either right or wrong.

This 1:1 test will be time–consuming and impact on the time school staff can spend settling children, most of whom will still only be four, into their new environment and routine.

Schools will probably need to narrow their focus in order to prepare children for the test, and families may face anxiety and confusion if their child is found to be 'failing.'

Why can't we allow teachers to exercise their professional judgment on how best to support the children they teach?

Teachers should be able to establish the capabilities and development needs of children in a way that is appropriate for that child and that does not label children as failing or below expected levels from the start.

The existing curriculum does.

Researchers believe it is likely a baseline check will be unreliable and statistically invalid due to the age of the children and the fact they will be in a new and unfamiliar setting.

There are also concerns the check will be damaging to children's wellbeing, engagement and attitudes to learning.

So why change it ?

**Cathy Earley,
by email**

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Owner Alan Buxton and his qualified and friendly team have built up an enviable reputation for quality and cost over the years; and they pride themselves on their attention to detail and customer satisfaction.

Forward-thinking Alan and his team embrace new technology and keep up-to-date with modern materials and techniques.

And, by bulk buying manufacturing materials, Homestyle Factory Kitchens can keep costs down and offer you great prices. Each product is made by a time-served cabinet maker, so you know you're getting great quality.

Homestyle Factory Kitchens is open to both trade and retail customers and has ranges on offer to suit all tastes and budgets, so you're bound to find the kitchen, bedroom or home office of your dreams.

Take a look at the brand new website to see the huge range of products and styles available. Each design will be bespoke, and all cabinets are constructed from 18mm edged all round colour co-ordinated textured board with solid backs.

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Call for council to buy empty shops rejected

By Danielle Thompson

A CALL by Derby ward councillor Adrian Owens for West Lancs Council to buy up and let out vacant retail units in the borough has been slammed as "foolish and risky" by the council leader.

The idea was put forward again by Cllr. Owens, leader of the recently–formed Our West Lancashire group, after plans were submitted to turn the former Shoe Zone shoe shop in Ormskirk town centre into a café.

He said: "The council has built up good reserves, which could be used in a sensible and profitable way by taking some control over retail units which come available. This would make better financial returns on investment but would also help with encouraging the right retailers to come into the town or those already here to expand."

However, Councillor David Westley, leader of the council, dismissed the idea.

He said: "Shops can be a sound investment but only once they have been let to a viable and financially sound tenant on a long lease. Councillor Owens appears to be suggesting the council take on vacant shops and then try to let them when the previous owner has failed to do so.

Shoe Zone on Aughton Street

"There is no justification in thinking the council would be any more successful than the private sector, particularly when he is also suggesting that restrictions be placed on the type of retailer. An empty shop does not bring in any rent and this loss of income coupled with the liability for business rates would make it a very risky investment for the council.

"Besides, the owners of the property may not want to sell and the council certainly could not force them to do so, as a compulsory purchase order would not be legally justified."

Edge Hill scholarship application deadline looms

THE deadline is approaching for Edge Hill students who may be eligible for scholarships worth up to £2,000.

Scholarships reward excellence in areas such as creative arts, enterprise, ICT, performing arts and volunteering.

Students joining a full–time undergraduate degree, PGCE or foundation degree, or already enrolled on one, may be eligible for an Outstanding Applicant Scholarship worth up to £1,000.

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For more details visit edgehill.ac.uk/entrance.

The closing date for applications for Outstanding Applicant Scholarships is Monday, June 1.

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Sausage Dinner	£3.50
Pie Dinner	£3.50
Fish Dinner	*Sml* £4.00 *Lrg* £5.00
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Barm Cake	45p
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Chips & Curry	*Sml* £1.70 *Lrg* £2.20
Chips & Gravy	*Sml* £1.70 *Lrg* £2.20
Chips, Curry and Rice	*Sml* £1.70
	Lrg £2.20
Chips, Curry & Fried Rice	*Sml* £1.70
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Cheese & Onion Pie	£1.40
Chicken & Mushroom Pie	£1.40
Chicken Breast	£2.60
Battered Sausage	£1.40
Spam Fritters	£1.00
Onion Rings	£1.40

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Little belters!

By **Danielle Thompson**

MEMBERS of a West Lancs martial arts club are real belters – and they've got the medals to prove it!

Ten youngsters from the Streetwise Taekwondo Club, based in Scarisbrick and Burscough, took part in the Quest Taekwondo under–17s tournament in Sheffield, competing against rivals – many of them older – from clubs throughout the country.

And they did the club proud with nine–year–old Joshua Tobin winning two gold medals and a silver medal in individual events, with teammates taking second, third and fourth places overall.

Another member of the club, which holds training sessions at St Mary's Catholic Primary School in Scarisbrick on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and at the Kelly Shirley School of Dance in Burscough on Wednesdays, 10–year–old Avyn Johnson recently became the youngest to achieve black belt grading.

Club instructor and 4th dan, Claire Howard, said: "We are so proud of all of the competitors who took part at Quest, they all did incredibly well.

Instructor Claire Howard and Streetwise Taekwondo students with their latest trophies. Code1080045

"Overall, in the under–17s category – which was won by the national champion – members of our club took the second, third and fourth places. Connor Clarke, 14, came second, 12 –year–old Jack Britton – who was formerly our youngest member to earn his black belt when he was 11 – came third, while Avyn finished fourth.

"They are all competing against much older rivals and we could not be more proud of them. We are also very proud of Avyn, not many children can achieve their black belt at such a young age, it's very impressive."

And Claire stressed that the club was open to all ages.

She said: "Anyone from the age of five upwards is welcome to come along and have a go. To give it a try, call us on 07967 995 072."

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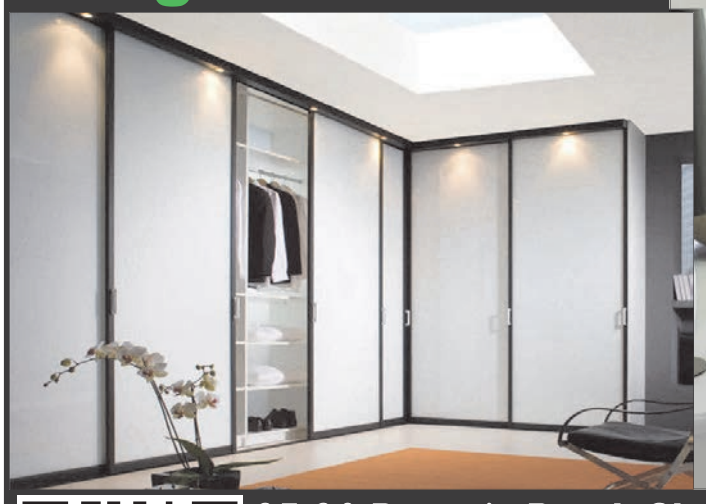

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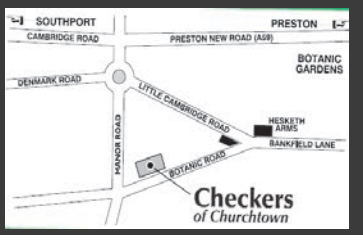

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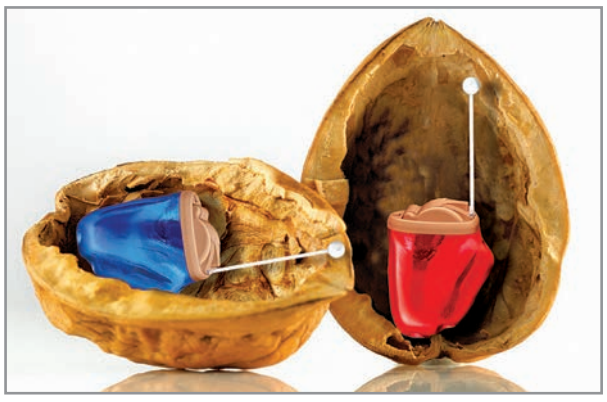

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Local swimmers make a splash for charity

£1,700–plus raised at Skem swimathon event

Report by **Henry James**

SWIMMERS from the borough joined more than 22,000 participants across the UK to complete this year's Swimathon 2015 Challenges to raise vital funds for cancer charity Marie Curie.

Nye Bevan Pool in Skelmersdale was one of more than 600 pools nationwide which hosted the event in which swimmers tackled 5k, 2.5k or 1,5k sponsored swims individually or in teams over 5k or 1.5k.

A total of 33 swimmers took part at the Nye Bevan Pool raising more than £1,700.

Sarah Fletcher, community fundraiser for Marie Curie, said: "Congratulations to all the swimmers who trained so hard to complete their challenges – they should be very proud of both their efforts in the water and in raising vital funds.

"All the money raised for Marie Curie will help make a huge difference to terminally ill people who wish to spend their final days at home surrounded by their loved ones."

Swimathon president and Olympic gold medallist, Duncan Goodhew, said: "It was great to see so many enthusiastic swimmers taking on the challenge. The atmosphere was electric at every pool and I want to thank everyone involved, they've really done an amazing job both in the pool and with their fundraising."

Celebrity Swimathon supporters Linda Barker and Duncan Goodhew

TV presenter and interior designer, Linda Barker, who took on her Swimathon challenge at the London Aquatics Centre, congratulated fellow swimmers and added: "By swimming this weekend you have made such a massive impact. The money raised will help Marie Curie care for those living with a terminal illness and their families."

Keep in touch with the local news and views on our website www.champnews.com

Bridge repairs set to start

WORK is set to take place later this week to repair a bridge on the A59 near Tarleton after it was struck by a vehicle in April.

Tarleton Bank Hall Bridge carries the main A59 Liverpool Road over the River Douglas.

There will be a lane–closure with two–way traffic controlled by temporary lights while the repairs are carried out, but engineers will be working during evenings and overnight to minimise disruption and complete the job as quickly as possible, while keeping the bridge open during the busiest part of the day.

Work will take place from 8 to 11pm tomorrow (Thursday, May 7) to allow engineers to lift a pontoon into the river to prepare for the repairs.

From Friday, May 8 to Sunday, May 10 work will also take place from 8pm to 6am.

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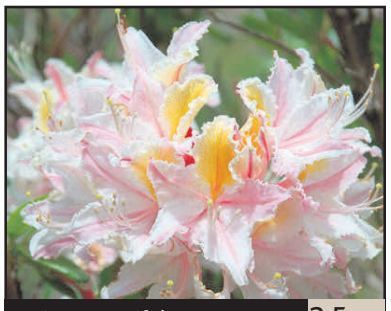

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First–time family buyers priced out of homes market says charity

NEARLY 70% of properties for sale in West Lancashire are out of the reach of families looking to buy their first home – according to new research published by the housing and homelessness charity, Shelter.

The organisation analysed asking prices for tens of thousands of properties on the market throughout the North West and compared them with the mortgage that an average family buying their first home could afford.

Exposing the depth of the region's housing shortage, the research revealed that only 31.5% of homes for sale in the borough are affordable for families that need at least two bedrooms.

And the charity is warning that unless politicians act swiftly to build the homes we need, families across the region will be forced to cope with continued instability and sky–high housing costs.

With the country due to go to the polls in the General Election on Thursday (May 7) additional research by the charity found that voters were likely to consider a pledge to build affordable homes among their top priorities when casting their vote.

Among the case studies revealed was Fiona, a lecturer and married mother–of–three who said she was priced out the market.

"I've always wanted a stable home for my family, but despite my husband and I both working in decent, professional jobs, house prices are way too high for us to even dream of being able to afford a home of our own.

Campbell Robb *(pictured, right),* chief executive of Shelter, said: "Decades of failing to deliver the homes we need is leaving millions trapped in expensive and unstable private renting, or in their childhood bedrooms, with barely a hope of saving for a home of their own.

"For the next government, whoever that may be, it's time for the talk to stop and the work to begin. Politicians need to act swiftly to deliver the 250,000 homes a year we need."

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Victoria: 07766 136641

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Aintree Lane
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The Wardens Club,
Blaguegate Lane,
Monday 5pm & 7pm
Kathy: 01695 423 658 **TUESDAY**

TUESDAY
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The Wardens Club,
Blaguegate Lane,
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Up Holland Methodist
Church, Alma Hill,
Tuesday 9.30am
Sarah: 07969 395302

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Red Lion Bridge
Liverpool Road South
Wednesday 9.30am
Sheila: 0151 521 3798

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British Legion
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next to Shell Garage
Wednesday 5pm & 6.30pm
Eileen: 0151 548 0658

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Liverpool Rd
Wednesday 4.30pm & 6pm
Marcia: 07976 897074

ORMSKIRK
Ormskirk Rugby Club, Green Lane
Wednesday 9.30 & 11.30am
Tina: 0151 548 4266 (Morning Group)

ORMSKIRK
Ormskirk Rugby Club, Green Lane
Wednesday 5.30 & 7.30pm
Tina: 0151 548 4266

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Winifred Lane,
Thursday 9.30am
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Long Lane,
Thursday 5.30 & 7.30pm
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Digmoor Community Centre
Birleywood
Thursday 9.30am & 11.30am
Jackie: 07888 830892

DIGMOOR, SKELMERSDALE
Digmoor Community Centre
Birleywood
Thursday 4.30pm & 6.30pm
Jackie: 07888 830892

MAGHULL
St Georges Social Centre
Station Rd
Thursday 5pm & 7pm
Sue: 07957 531346

FRIDAY
LYDIATE (Morning Group)
St Gregorys Parish Centre
Liverpool Rd
Friday 9.30 & 11.30am
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SATURDAY
ORMSKIRK (Morning Group)
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U3A musical evening

A WEST Lancashire branch of a charity that aims to help the retired, semi–retired and over–55s learn new skills and hobbies, is hosting a Musical Evening on Saturday, May 16.

The choir of the Aughton & Ormskirk University of the Third Age (U3A) will stage the event at Aughton Village Hall, Winifred Lane starting at 7.30pm.

Choir member, Ruth Griffiths, said: "The choir has been going quite a few years now although our current conductor, Duncan Roberts, only took over a year ago. However, the choir have settled in with him very nicely and we believe we are making a most fantastic sound."

Joining the choir on the evening will be Ruth's sister, Susan Black, a highly–respected soprano soloist and musician, who is travelling from her home in Malvern Wells to sing.

The bar will be open on the night and there will also be a raffle with proceeds going towards the cost of sheet music for the choir.

Tickets, priced £5, can be ordered from Ruth on 01695 571772.

Meanwhile the group are also looking to recruit new members for the choir, with or without previous experience, especially men.

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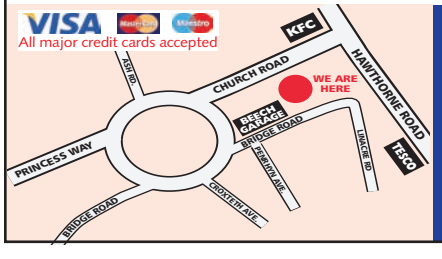

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Civic guest joins care home residents for musical treat

RESIDENTS of a West Lancs care home played host to a special guest when they enjoyed a musical treat at their latest afternoon tea event.

The mayor, Councillor Doreen Stephenson, joined residents of the Springfield Court Nursing Home in Aughton and their family and friends for the event with entertainment provided by the popular Southport–based, all–male barber shop harmony and classic melodic singing group, Wayfarers Chorus.

Liz Wynne, events co–ordinator at the home in Springfield Road, said: "We put on afternoon tea events regularly for the residents and thought it would be a great idea to invite the mayor down to speak to them. She chatted with residents and their families about memories and experiences and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

"The choir were fantastic, they are very popular around here and the residents loved them."

Other famous guests who have visited the home over the years include veteran comedian Ken Dodd, former Everton and England footballer, Joe Royle and Broadway actress and artist Jeri Sager.

• RIGHT: Springfield Court residents enjoy the performance by Southport–based Wayfarers Chorus

Primary pupils stage mock poll

Some of the pupils who are campaigning at the school

WHILE the country counts down to what experts predict will be the closest General Election in many yeas, pupils at a local primary school primary school are staging their own poll to help them understand better how democracy works.

Youngsters from Years 5 and 6 at Richard Durning's Endowed Primary School, Bispham are staging their mock election on the same day as the national poll, Thursday, May 7.

Fiona Wilkinson from the school said: "The children have all thought carefully about ideas for their manifesto, are busy campaigning throughout the school and will be taking part in their own hustings on Wednesday (May 6).

"Our Polling Day is Thursday and the results will be counted and announced on Friday, May 8 at our weekly assembly."

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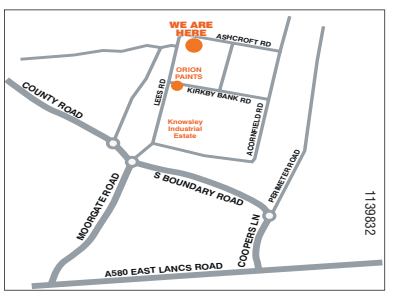

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Chance to do a spot of Hobnobbing in Aughton

A NEW coffee morning club for Aughton residents is set to hold its first meeting on Wednesday, May 13.

Organised by the Aughton Community Together group, the Hobnobs Club will meet at Aughton Village Hall, Winifred Lane from 11am and members of the public of any age are welcome to join.

Following the initial meeting further get–togethers will be held on Wednesdays June 10 and 24 and July 8 before taking a break in August and resuming in September.

It's hoped the club will be popular with older residents, particularly those who are not involved in existing organised groups.

As well as socialising over coffee in an informal setting, depending on people's wishes, there will be guest speakers, entertainment from local choirs, bingo, bring–and–buy sales and raffles.

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Same breeding doesn't mean same traits...

GENERALLY speaking, my brother George and I rubbed along pretty well together, but in one way at least we were very different. George was a creature of habit, whilst I am a tad more pragmatic.

For instance, every afternoon at roughly 2pm George would take his then rapidly growing pup, Cinders, for exactly the same walk round the nearby Jubilee Woods – about two–and–three–quarter miles – come rain, shine or high water.

I, on the other hand, would saddle my dog Tina up a little later and go on a slightly longer (because of George's arthritis) walk. Assuming that the weather was at least dry when we set off. If it was inclement I would simply abort the mission and go later.

But my bro plodded round leaning on his stick and sometimes came home very wet, with a somewhat soggy doggy.

Now, of course, I have different problems. I have two rather large rough collies to take walkies and choices to make.

My difficulty is that though both are fairly good and obedient, both have very different characteristics. And anyone who says that any given breed of dog is like this or like that ought to try living with Tina and Cinders.

But they do share one trait at least. Both are very keen on scent–marking and that can be awkwardly embarrassing if you have bitches. It takes experience to tell the difference when they squat for Number Ones or Number Twos. Which means every time they decide to stop you risk totally unfounded accusatory stares (or worse) from passers–by.

And just to make life that bit more difficult for me, the two often choose different spots with, I suppose different interesting smells, to anoint in this discomforting manner.

So as often as possible I try to take them out separately, which adds both to the distance I walk and the time it takes. It can also mean going out on occasion when previously I might have put it off.

Fortunately, neither of the dogs seem to mind this apartheid. I reckon that though they are quite happy to trot along together, they both enjoy having me all to themselves too.

Mind you, Tina often gets the better of Cinders in that, though Cindy is without doubt pretty and certainly the more outgoing of the pair, she is also, as I have mentioned before, possibly the greediest creature on God's earth.

Which means that if I am visiting a stranger's home and take a dog with me (of course I always ask if a canine will be welcome beforehand) Tina invariably does the honours simply because Cinders would perpetually be on the lookout for anything edible and be a distinct liability.

Tina though can be a trifle awkward in quite the other way. Folk frequently offer her a biscuit – and the daft dog invariably turns her aristocratic nose up at it, which can be nearly as embarrassing.

She usually relents once the stranger (to her) has established his or her credentials by talking to me for five minutes or so and then restores herself to favour by accepting whatever treats are offered in a gentle fashion – no Cinders–style snatch and grab for her!

I suppose the moral of these ramblings is that you should be prepared to put yourself out to make others happy.

Anyway, Tina and Cinders are my loved and trusted (Cinders and food excepted) companions who give me unconditional love – and are quite prepared to put up with the often changing times and places in their happy lives.

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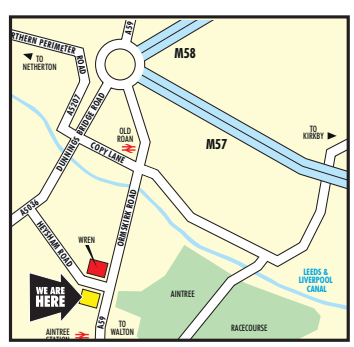

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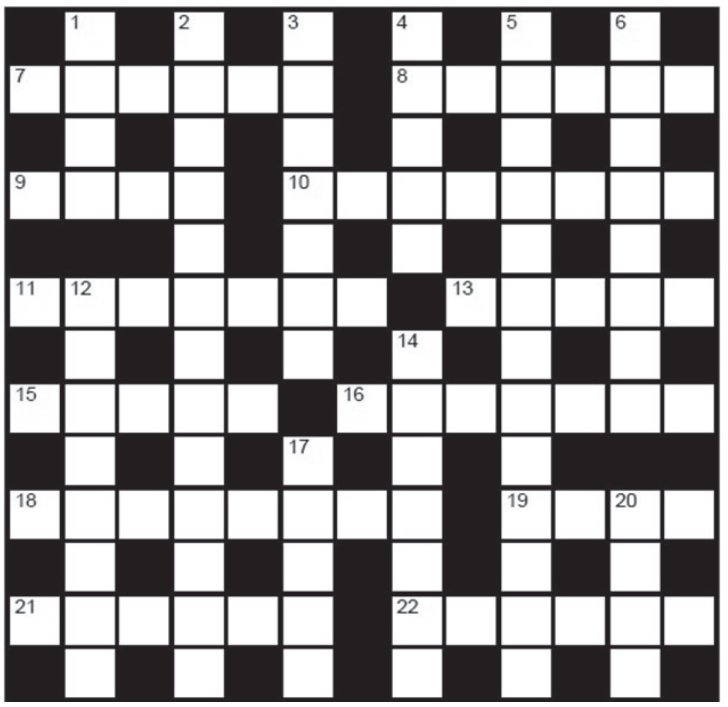

Last week's solutions:

Across: 7 Fortune hunter. 8 Spinster. 9 Tool. 10 Outcrop. 12 Gypsy. 14 Bairn. 16 Run-down. 19 Gaff. 20 Ordnance. 22 Belgian waffle.

Down: 1 Coop. 2 Ethnic. 3 Unction. 4 Charm. 5 Knotty. 6 Tenon saw. 11 Unawares. 13 Put-down. 15 Refuge. 17 Dwarfs. 18 Moral. 21 Cola.

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ACROSS

7 Unjust (6)
8 Lacking in quantity or quality (6)
9 Give up (power or territory) (4)
10 Pull out of (8)
11 Cavalry soldier (7)
13 Former popular song (5)
15 Scatter, spread untidily (5)
16 Novelty (7)
18 Rod used to measure amount of oil in a car's engine (8)
19 Large area of water surrounded by land (4)
21 Official order, edict (6)
22 Breed of cat, goat or rabbit (6)

DOWN

1 Initial poker stake (4)
2 Opposite of off-the-peg? (4-2-7)
3 Full of people (7)
4 Literary term meaning to strike with a firm blow (5)
5 Crane fly (5,8)
6 Burglaries (5-3)
12 Person or business selling directly to the consumer (8)
14 Not Saturday or Sunday (7)
17 Fastened securely in position (5)
20 Pavement edge (4)

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WIN! Tickets for Godspell in Concert

Andy Abraham

THIS Spring, Godspell In Concert, the rock musical, comes to the Palace Theatre Manchester for one night only on Tuesday, May 19.

The UK tour will feature a brand new, modern–day rock score packed with favourites such as Light of the World, All Good Gifts and Day by Day. This timeless tale of friendship, loyalty and love has touched the hearts of countless theatre–goers all over the world – and now UK theatre fans can join in the celebration as a spectacular ensemble is set to stir souls and raise spirits, aided by a full live band.

The cast is led by X–Factor finalist, Andy Abraham.

Book your tickets today by calling 0844 871 3018 or visit www.atgtickets.com/manchester

To win one of 5 pairs of tickets to see Godspell in Manchester on Tuesday, May 19, just answer this simple question:

Q. Which popular TV Talent show gave Andy Abraham his big break?

Send your answer by email to henry.james@champnews.com

Entries must reach us by Tuesday, May 12, 2015. Please include your name, full postal address and a daytime contact number. Winners will be the senders of the first 5 correct entries drawn after the closing date. Usual Champion competition rules apply. Editor's decision is final.

• *Terms and conditions: Tickets can be collected at the box office at the theatre on the night from 6.30pm, winners must give name and media won from. Extra tickets are not permitted, but can be purchased at the box office. Seating – which can be in all areas of the auditorium – cannot be changed on the night. The marketing office doesn't have access to seating for mobility impaired winners, but given at least 48 hours notice and subject to availability we will endeavour to reseat winners. Replacement tickets will not be offered and correspondence will not be entered into. There is no cash alternative.*

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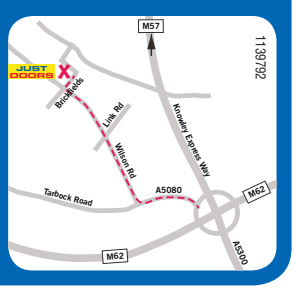

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500 expected to line up for dual bike challenge

Report by **Danielle Thompson**

A CYCLING challenge launched last year starting and finishing at Edge Hill University is returning for a second year – bigger and better.

The Cycle Sportive event, organised by Vital Events in conjunction with the Harry Middleton Cycling Club and The Bicycle Lounge in Ormskirk, will be held on Sunday, May 31.

Last year's inaugural event sold out with 300 cyclists taking part so this year's entry has been extended to 500.

The event is divided into two sections, the 82–mile Roman Road Challenge and the 36–mile Croston Crusade.

The club with the highest combined number of finishers across both routes will be awarded the Harry Middleton Trophy.

The Roman Road Challenge takes riders over Hunter's Hill, Rivington Reservoir, Foxholes, Matchmoor, past Belmont Village and out to Edgworth on to the infamous Roman Road for six undulating miles before returning past Tockholes, Brindle, Hillhouse Lane, Walton le Dale, Midge Hall, Croston and Mawdesley.

The Croston Crusade follows the same route out of Ormskirk and over Hunter's Hill but then at the 12.5 mile point will head north towards the eastern edge of Mawdesley/Croston Moss, into Croston then crossing the rivers Yarrow and Douglas and the Leeds–Liverpool canal. It will then go through Holmeswood, past Mere Sands Wood, though Rufford and back onto the moss past Mawdesley and across Hoscar Moss returning to Edge Hill via Blythe Lane, Castle Lane and Westhead.

A timed section has also been introduced in this year's event on Hunter's Hill, to allow riders in both events to set a time.

It costs £22 to enter the Roman Road Challenge, £19 on the day for the Croston Crusade for adults or £12 for 12 to 16–year–olds.

Riders in action sat last year's inaugural event

Entrants must be 16 for the Roman Road challenge. 12 to 16–year–olds can enter the Croston Crusade but must be accompanied by an adult rider during the event.

For more information, visit www.vitalevents.co.uk/events/roman–road–challenge.

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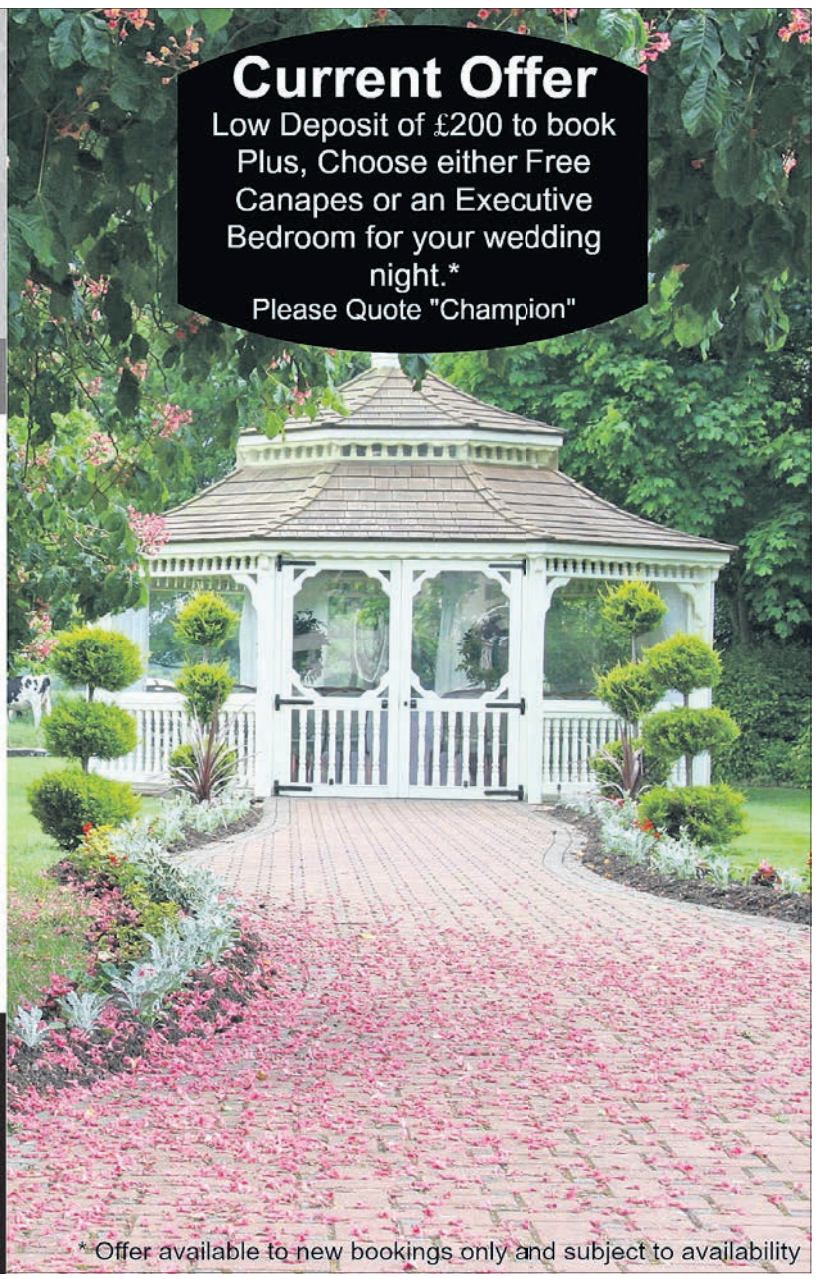

* Offer available to new bookings only and subject to availability

Donors sign up to stem cell register in support of Finn

By Danielle Thompson

MORE than 350 people signed up to the stem cell register at a recent event in Ormskirk.

The blood cancer charity Delete Blood Cancer UK held the registration event at the BACO pub on Railway Road last week after an appeal was launched by the family of a seven–year–old boy battling bone marrow failure.

The charity supported the family of Finn McEwen, from Litherland, who has a rare blood disorder, by holding sign–up events across the North West, to encourage people to register as potential stem cell donors on the UK Stem Cell Registry.

For many blood cancer patients a blood stem cell donation is often their only chance of survival.

Finn was recently diagnosed with a the rare blood disorder, Myelodysplastic Syndrome, which causes bone marrow failure. He now needs to find a suitable donor for a stem cell transplant to overcome the disease.

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Jessica's on the reading gold trail

JESSICA Penney is the latest young member of Burscough library to complete the Lancashire Reading Trail challenge.

The 10–year–old had to read and review 50 books to earn her gold certificate and free book at the library in Mill Lane.

• RIGHT: Jessica with her gold certificate and free book

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Breathe Easy Group enjoy 'helpful' talk by specialist nurse

Report by **Henry James**

RESPIRATORY nurse specialist Pat Fairclough gave a talk entitled 'Air and How Does It Get There' at the latest meeting of the West Lancashire and Southport Breathe Easy group at the Girl Guide HQ in Green Lane, Ormskirk.

She began by talking about the composition of the air we breathe and how this changes depending on factors including climate, time of year, time of day and altitude. And she went on to explain how pressurised cabins in airlines contributes to jet lag.

She told the group that respiratory patients get used to lower levels of oxygen than other people and that being breathless is not the same as being short of oxygen. She also talked about air pollution and avoidance.

Explaining how the body's respiratory system works, including the importance of breathing through the nose, she also described how the bronchial system inside the lung divides into 16 million passages.

Pat also spoke of the inflammation and narrowing of the airways and muscles which is present in asthma and how the use of particular drugs can help patients with a number of respiratory problems.

She developed this to explain about the main breathing muscle, the diaphragm and how this moves during inhalation and exhalation.

Her final and overall message to the group was that chest exercises can make a big difference to people's conditions and well–being.

Pat Ireland from the West Lancs and Southport Breathe Easy group said: "This was most revealing and helpful talk, even for those of us with life–long respiratory conditions, who may have previously thought we knew it."

The next meeting of the group will be held on Monday, May 18 starting at 11.30am when the speakers will be Jenny Goulburne and Sue Boughie, representing the Southport Chronic Care team and West Lancashire Community Matrons respectively.

Pat Fairclough

Advertising Feature

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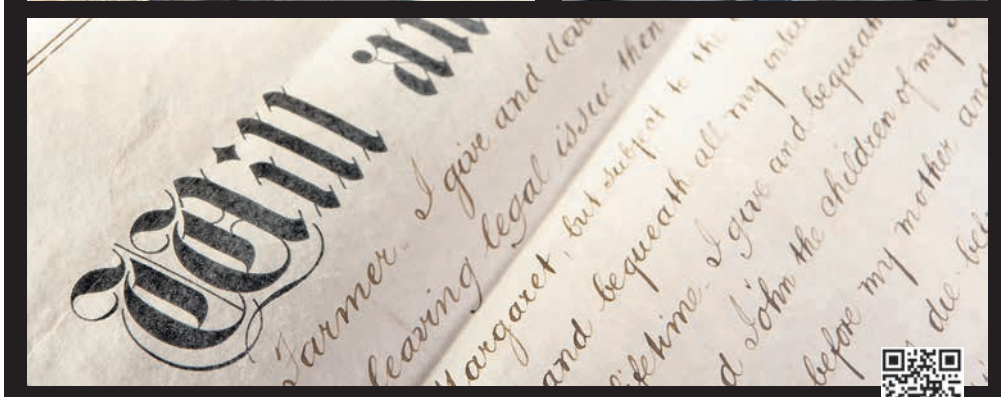

www.dphlaw.co.uk

Care Home Fees – Have You Planned for the Future?

An Englishman's home is his castle, or so the saying goes. However, what steps have you taken to make sure it is protected for you and your family and from the possibility of having to sell your property to fund care fees in future?

The average cost of a care home place is £532 per week and for a nursing home place it is £750 per week. Recent research has shown that most people who require residential care need it for 4 years. Therefore, a stay in a care home for this length of time would cost more than £100,000 and a stay in a nursing home would cost over £150,000.

From April 2016, a series of reforms regarding the funding of care will come into effect as a result of the Care Act 2014. In essence, a cap on care costs of £72,000 will be introduced but this will not include the daily living costs of being in a care home or nursing home. Therefore, it is not as simple as saying that you will not have to pay more than £72,000 towards your care.

The new rules will be an improvement on the existing system but they are by no means perfect. Therefore, it is better to start planning for the future now. To protect your property you should consider:

- Putting in place a Will (or updating an existing Will).
- Consider the use of a trust (in your Will or as a lifetime settlement).
- Put in place Lasting Powers of Attorney so you know your affairs will be looked after if you cannot handle matters yourself.

The rules around care funding are complex and there is no magic solution. At Dickinson Parker Hill Solicitors, we have been advising local families for over 200 years on how they can protect their assets and put their affairs in order. Our solicitors are members of recognised bodies such as the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP), Solicitors for the Elderly (SFE) and the Private Client Section of the Law Society and can advise you on the options available to you.

Home visits can be arranged for all matters and we offer free storage for legal documents such as Wills, Lasting Powers of Attorney and title deeds. If you would like further information please call

01695 574 201

or email Michael Prendergast at **mprendergast@dphlaw.co.uk**

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1137282

ADVERTISING FEATURE

LIFE FILLED WITH FRIENDSHIP AT **BRUNLEES COURT**

McCarthy and Stone is celebrating friendship in 2015, and is inviting retirees in Southport to visit its Brunlees Court Assisted Living development, to see the thriving community that is developing there first-hand.

During the past 38 years, thousands of friendships have been forged at McCarthy and Stone developments across the UK and the benefits are clear to see as recent research indicates that friendships are both good for your health and can even prolong your life. A study* monitored 1,500 people over the age of 70 and found that those with the largest friendship group outlived those with the smallest by an amazing 22%.

In addition, other studies have shown that keeping in contact with a variety of friends in later life can lower the risk of developing dementia, reduce stress and aid recovery from an illness.

Fiona Brooks, Regional Sales and Marketing Director at McCarthy and Stone Northern, explains: "There are many benefits to living at Brunlees Court, but the enriching friendships that are made among our retirement communities has to be one of the most valuable.

"We understand that retaining independence is important to our homeowners and our first class apartments provide both space and privacy, but also the benefit of having a fantastic group of friends on their doorstep."

Brunlees Court on Cambridge Road aims to bridge the gap between conventional Retirement Living and residential care. Homeowners are able to retain their independence through home ownership, yet still have the peace of mind from a range of 24/7 security and support services, as well as a thriving community of new friends close by.

Brunlees Court boasts an impressive list of facilities, such as a fantastic table service restaurant which offers a daily three-course lunch, a guest suite for when visitors want to stay over and a homeowners' lounge for socialising with other residents, with all the maintenance and gardening taken care of by a professional and friendly team. Every homeowner receives 1 hour of domestic support each week, which can be topped up if required, to help with their needs whether it's cleaning, washing, or even grocery shopping.

Anyone interested in Assisted Living at Brunlees Court is invited to call 01704 510731 or visit the marketing suite, open between 10.30am-5.00pm daily.

Alternatively, please visit: http://www.mccarthyandstone.co.uk/

Source: The Australian Longitudinal Study of Aging

1139917

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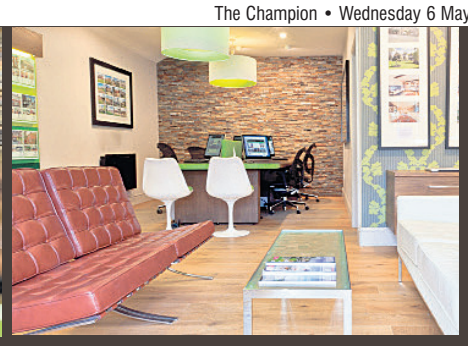


GLENSIDE, **APPLEY BRIDGE** £310,000

A large versatile, six bedroom family home in a highly prized residential development

- Detached family home
- Six bedrooms
- South west facing garden
- Versatile living spaces
- Sought after location
- Integral garage
- Two bathrooms
- 1945 SQ.FT

NEW

DOUGLAS CLOSE **RUFFORD** £310,000

Modern 4 bedroom home with double garage and rural outlook

- Modern detached family home
- Backs onto farmland
- Quiet cul-de-sac position
- No chain delay
- Rural views
- Detached double garage
- Four bedrooms
- 1902 SQ.FT EPC D

NEW PRICE

ASH BROW, **NEWBURGH** £215,000

A pretty characterful cottage in the centre of Newburgh Village

- Attractive Cottage
- Private rear garden
- Generous sized rooms
- No Chain Delay
- Central village location
- Period features
- Requires updating
- 953 SQ.FT

NEW

WILLOWS, BLACKBURN ROAD, **CHORLEY** £259,000

Impressive period home with open views and south facing garden

- Character home
- Period features
- South facing garden
- Large reception rooms
- Beautiful décor
- Open views front & back
- Three bedrooms & study
- 1222 SQ.FT

SOLD

BRAMBLE WAY, **PARBOLD** £250,000

A spacious three bedroom family home in a lovely canal side setting, overlooking Parbold Hill.

- Superb village location
- Enjoys lovely canal side setting
- Versatile 3 bedroom layout
- Brick built garage & store
- Overlooks Parbold Hill
- Large mature gardens
- Superb presentation
- 1102 SQ.FT.

SOLD

NEW STREET, **MAWDESLEY** £173,995

An affordable true bungalow in a first class village location.

- Semi-detached true bungalow
- Detached garage
- Gas central heating
- No chain delay
- Two bedrooms
- Village location
- Double glazing
- 869 SQ.FT

SOLD

OAKVILLA, BANNISTER GREEN, **HESKIN** £209,000

A pretty cottage with rural views located within walking distance of Eccleston village

- Semi-detached cottage
- South West facing garden
- Beautifully appointed
- Beautiful new bathroom
- Parking to the rear
- Rural views
- Wood burning stove
- 896 SQ.FT

SOLD

SONLEA, CARR LANE, LATHOM £275,000

A great view and over 1800 SQ.FT of family sized accommodation help set this property apart.

- Impressive family home
- Large south facing garden
- Four bedrooms
- Accessible location
- Lovely rural outlook
- Substantial detached garage
- Three reception rooms
- 1818 SQ.FT / EPC RATING D

SOLD

SUN COTTAGE, **PARBOLD** £500,000

A split level five bedroom home with double garage and rural views

- Split level design
- Central village location
- Three bathrooms
- Double garage
- Rural views
- Five bedrooms
- Contemporary design
- 2534 SQ.FT

SOLD

LIVERPOOL ROAD SOUTH, **BURSCOUGH** £285,000

A handsome traditionally built four bedroom family home in an established sought after location.

- Four bedroom detached
- Large reception rooms
- Established position
- DG & CH
- Detached garage
- Generous sized garden
- Character property
- 1415 SQ.FT /EPC RATING E

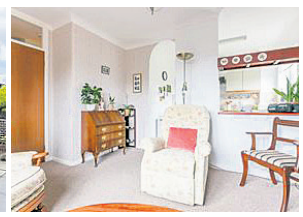
NEW PRICE

BURNSIDE, **PARBOLD** £225,000

A three bedroom detached family home that enjoys rural and river views

- Three bedroom detached
- Rural views
- Potential to extend Conservatory
- 1111 SQ.FT
- Village location
- Overlooks River Douglas
- Attached garage

NEW



BEACON CROSSING, **PARBOLD** £100,000

A delightful retirement apartment located in the centre of Parbold village.

- Retirement development
- Central village location
- Stair lift included
- No chain delay
- Over 55's only
- First floor apartment
- Attractively appointed
- 526 SQ.FT

NEW PRICE

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Properties of Distinction
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HIGH LEES HIGHER LANE
DALTON WN8 7RA

£650,000

NEW PRICE

An impressive period home set in 0.4 acres with stunning rural views

High Lees is an impressive, double fronted period home that enjoys simply stunning views across the Douglas Valley towards Parbold Hill. Set in a beautiful established and gated 0.4 acre private garden plot, this imposing and spacious family home affords a generous 3211 SQ.FT of tastefully appointed living accommodation with attached double garage. Higher Lane is surrounded by lush green belt farmland and is home to some of the area's finest property with Junction 27 of the M6 motorway just 4.3 miles away, it is also a perfect location from which to commute. The living accommodation is bright and well decorated, a number of the rooms either feature bay windows or have French doors to enjoy the views. Double glazing is installed and the property is warmed by gas central heating. The living accommodation comprises of an entrance hallway, study, dining room/snug, lounge, large fitted breakfast kitchen with walk in pantry, utility and ground floor cloakroom/wc. The upper floor features a family shower room and four bedrooms, the master bedroom suite includes its own dressing room and full size en-suite bathroom. Externally High Lees is set well back from the roadway behind electronic secure gates, a large block paved driveway affords access into the double garage. The rear garden backs onto green belt farm land, a six acre plot is potentially available by separate negotiation. The private and enclosed garden is a real highlight, expansive lawns and stone paved patios are well placed to enjoy the sunny aspect and far reaching views.

BROOK COTTAGE, BACK LANE, MAWDESLEY
L40 3SZ

£575,000

An impressive sized detached four bedroom bungalow in an idyllic semi-rural location.

- Idyllic location
- Double garage
- Lovely views
- Large designer kitchen
- Four bedrooms
- Four reception rooms
- Beautiful garden
- 1796 SQ.FT

NEW

BEACON LANE, DALTON
WN8 7RR

£475,000

An individual four bedroom detached with stunning views of the countryside

- Four bedroom Detached
- Large reception rooms
- Newly fitted kitchen
- Detached garage
- Stunning views
- Stylish Bathrooms
- Private gated gardens
- 1761 SQ.FT

NEW

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Exhibition exploring lives at outbreak of WWII coming to venue

A NEW exhibition exploring images of lives and landscapes in Britain at the outbreak of World War II is coming to the Atkinson in Southport.

The Recording Britain collection, housed at London's V&A, is the result of a unique and ambitious documentary project initiated by art historian and broadcaster Sir Kenneth Clark. The result was a collection of over 1,500 watercolours and drawings.

More than 90 artists – renowned professionals and gifted amateurs – were commissioned to make 'sympathetic records' of vulnerable buildings, landscapes and lifestyles.

The exhibition, Recording Britain, comes to Southport from this Saturday (May 9).

EVENTS - OUT & ABOUT

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Loose Woman heads for Blackpool

Jane McDonald will be starring as Grizabella in Andrew Lloyd Webber's Cats for an eight week run at Blackpool's Opera House this summer.

She will be replacing Nicole Scherzinger, who ended her stint on a critical high as the glamorous Grizabella in a sell-out season and she was even nominated for an Olivier award.

Best known for being on outspoken Loose Women presenter, Jane rose to fame on the 1998 TV show, The Cruise, a docu-soap that captured the lives of people who worked on cruise ships. McDonald has stated that she was "thrilled" to be joining the cast of Cats: "I will be working with a fantastic production team and cast and I am looking forward to the reaction from audiences in Blackpool."

Jane won the part of Grizabella after Andrew Lloyd Webber watched a video of the Yorkshire singer's audition - and subsequently, he was wowed my McDonald.

If you fancy seeing McDonald performing in Blackpool, why not make a weekend of it? Tour operator Travelstyle are offering a series of weekend breaks including return coach travel from your local pick-up point, overnight dinner, bed and breakfast accommodation in Blackpool, plus a theatre ticket for just £99.95.

For more information, visit travelstyletours.co.uk or call 0844 682 7000 for a free brochure.

Jane McDonald appears in Cats at the Blackpool Opera House from 9 July - 6 September 2015

1139959

Picture house to use all new screening equipment for their next presentation

PARBOLD Picture House's presentation of Man and Superman on Thursday, May 14 at 7pm will be the first time all their new screening equipment will be used.

The upgrade to Parbold Picture House's projection, screen and sound cost £54,000 and was made possible by a maximum grant of £50,000 by Biffa Award, a multi–million pound fund managed by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), which utilises landfill tax credits donated by Biffa Group Limited. The funding award was reported in the Champion at the end of last year.

Parbold Parish Council paid to Biffa Award an additional ten–per cent levy of over £5,000.

The evening also celebrates a £25,000 grant by Lancashire Environmental Fund for improvements to general and ambient lighting and the servery.

Michael Bonsall, member of the Community Association, Picture House Film Crew, chairman of Douglas Music and the principal fund–raiser for the almost half a million pounds in grants awarded since 2008 to Parbold Community Association and Douglas Music, said: "The PCA was delighted to be awarded the maximum possible grants by both Biffa and Lancashire Environmental Funds because they endorse the long term vision for our audiences and community."

Clare Gillard, a member of the Picture House Film Crew, said: "The Film Crew is thrilled by the extremely positive audience feedback. It makes the Live Transmission screenings even more special and the audience is becoming a community. They mingle and talk to each other in the intervals".

A member of the audience said: "It's wonderful to see internationally important theatre, opera and music so near to us, with easy parking, a great welcome and all reasonably priced."

Because of its community character, the auditorium at Parbold Village Hall is beginning to have a regional footprint.

Surveys show that audience travels an average distance of nearly six miles, with some regularly travelling up to 25 miles from adjoining towns and villages and several travel over 15 miles regularly from Blackburn, Preston, Warrington, Maghull, Ormskirk and a large number regularly from Wigan.

Since the Picture House first began in November 2009 with fortnightly screenings and Live Transmissions of theatre and opera, there have been over 13,000 attendances. Douglas Music's concerts are now regularly sold out.

Pascal and Ami Roge will be appearing at the Piano Festival **Code NA**

Music society to present Piano Festival

DOUGLAS Music, Parbold is presenting a Piano Festival of concerts and film themed around pianists and piano music on the weekend of Saturday and Sunday, June 20 and 21 to mark the Midsummer.

The event is supported by Lancashire County Council.

It is an extension of Douglas Music's 2014–15 Live Music at the weekend concerts which have been sell–outs across the season including Saturday, May 9's performance by singer Jacqui Dankworth and pianist, Charlie Woods, which has been sold out for weeks.

FUNCTION SUITES

Advertising Feature

The Aughton institute with the help of Martin and Louise, the man and wife management team, has established itself as a popular function location, offering top class catering (by Aughton catering) and entertainment packages. The room is free of charge to use and the team are always more than happy to sit down for a coffee and a chat to discuss personal requirements. The club is also very popular for their live entertainment shows. A whole host of artistes have performed, and May is no exception. For the first time in a small venue and for one weekend only the UK's number one swing singer Asa Murphy is bringing his live 16 piece swing band to the club, in preparation for his show at the Liverpool Philharmonic on Friday May 22nd. Tickets for the Asa weekend at The Tute as you can imagine is selling out fast, for more information contact the club direct.

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1139938

Jodie Prenger aiming for a hit with show

JODIE Prenger is to star in a new production of Calamity Jane which is at the Liverpool Empire until this Saturday (May 9).

Jodie is joined by Tom Lister as Wild Bill Hickok, Alex Hammond as Danny and Phoebe Street as Katie Brown.

Calamity Jane can outrun and outshoot any man in Deadwood. Hard, boastful and desperate to impress, she travels to Chicago to recruit a star, Adelaide Adams, for the Deadwood Stage. But things don't go too smoothly for Calamity, as everyone in town favours the new girl and she struggles to keep her jealousy and pride in check. It takes her long–standing enemy Wild Bill Hickok to make her see sense, and realise her Secret Love.

Jodie Prenger is probably best known for winning the role of Nancy in Cameron Mackintosh's West End production of Oliver! through the BBC television series I'd Do Anything.

editorial@champnews.com

Entertainments

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Pitches £12.00 per car - Transits P.O.A.

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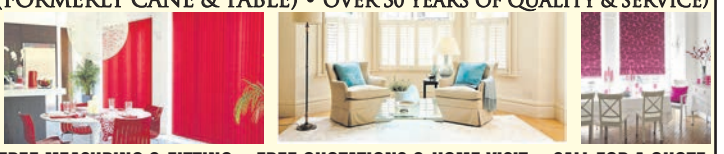
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GLAZED PLANT POTS 12 glazed 6in pots, various colours, smaller ones available£4 £4 01942218408(orrell, Wigan)

LAWN SCARIFER Mountfield RE300 electric lawn scarifier, excellent condition £50 01704 573226

PETROL MOWER WANTED Petrol mower wanted preferably with roller £ 01704 573226

GARDENING

ROCKERY STONES Large rockery stones.Buyer must collect. £Free 07966 306952

HOBBIES

1970/80S SINGLE RECORDS 100 7 inch records from 1970s and 80s £30 01704895709

AIR BED brand new intex twin sized pillow rest camping air bed with built in pump £40.00 07790791733

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PEAVEY ELECTRIC GUITAR Peavey raptor electric guitar suit begginer. £40 01704895709

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PLAYSTATION 2 PlayStation 2all connectionstwo controllersmemory card, 3 games, perfect working order, can be seen working £15 01942218408(orrell, Wigan)

THE FOSTER FACTORY by David Learmont. Witty, acerbic. Also on kindle and nook books. Stylish writing. £7 07599331606

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TOYS AND GAMES

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TOYS AND GAMES

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MISC

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ALEX RIDER BOOKS x2 by Anthony Horowitz. Eagle Strike (S/B) & Scorpia (H/B). £5 01695 575401

AQUAROLL 40LTR Aquaroll water carrier with handle Bargain £10.00 01696 732586

BEREAVEMENT ITEMS Due to bereavement, various items for sale including pictures, ornament's, curtains, shower rail and shower curtains, small table, table cloths, ect, ect, will sell separate if required. £60.00 07530562650

MISC

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CAMERAS canon sureshot ex 35mm, canon snappy lx 35mm, canon ixus elph 24–48mm... offers £00.00 07790791733

CHIMNEY POT 3ft x 8 ins, use for decorative garden ornament or chimney pot. Also bag of baby girls clothes mixed £10. £25 07790 657 596

CLOCK/WALLET jack daniels old num7 brand black face wind up alarm clock with jd old num 7 brand leather wallet £15.00 o.n.o. 07790791733

COAL SCUTTLE Old galvanised coal scuttle, would suit canal barge or as a plant display, would look nice painted also. £14.00 07530562650

DAVID WALLIAMS BOOKS H/B Ratburger, S/B Gangsta Granny, S/B Billionaire Boy, Good Condition. £5 01695 575401

DECK CHAIR multi–coloured striped deck chair £15.00 o.n.o. 07790791733

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MISC

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GO GO ELITE scooter, used once, fits car boot, under warranty, cost £635 £best offer 0151 922 9974

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The Royal British Legion
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in Southport has recently been modernised and we are now looking to appoint the following posts to work at our award winning 36 bedroomed hotel. This is a very exciting opportunity to be part of our valued and award winning team. Byng House (Hotel) provides well deserved holidays for those in the ex-service and current serving community who meet our application criteria.

Duty Manager
Executive Chef
Head Chef
Chef 21 Hours
Food & Beverage Supervisor

1139977

To apply for any of these posts visit our website: http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/about-us/jobs-at-the-legion

Alternatively: Collect an application form in person from Byng House, 30 Promenade, Southport, PR8 1QU

Closing date for applications: ***18th May 2015***

Please note CV's are not accepted and we are not seeking the assistance of recruitment agencies. Preferential treatment will be given to Legion employees at risk of redundancy.

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Further information is available on our website www.ndirections.co.uk or call **0151 934 3726** for a job pack

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Ormskirk West End Primary School
Grimshaw Lane, Ormskirk L39 1PA (112 on roll).

Ormskirk West End is a small school with excellent relationships with our pupils, their families and the wider community. We have a friendly and dedicated team of teaching and support staff, which in September will include our newly recruited Headteacher.

0.6 Teacher x1

£22,243 to £37,871 a year. M1-U3. **Ref: 154260**

Required 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016 for 3 full days a week. Our Governing Body are looking to appoint a talented and enthusiastic teacher to join our hardworking team. You will work in our Year 3/4 class, on a temporary 12 month contract, with the possibility of extending further pending budgetary review.
We are currently a 4 class school and so are seeking someone ideally with experience of teaching mixed age classes. You will share our Year 3/4 class, most likely working every Wednesday to Friday (0.6). You will also ideally teach a MFL (preferably Spanish) to all of our Key Stage 2 pupils.
Essential: Qualified Teacher Status, evidence of outstanding classroom practice, ability to set and achieve high standards of learning, behaviour and care for all learners, ability to use IT effectively to enhance teaching and learning, high levels of personal motivation, enthusiasm and reliability.
Interview date: 17 June 2015.

Teaching assistant 2A x1

£15,941 to £17,372 a year. Pro rata. **Ref: 154267**

This is a 5.25 Minimum Variable Hours Contract - 31.25 hours a week. Required 4 September 2015 to 31 August 2016 to work during term-time.
Our Governing Body are looking to appoint the following talented and enthusiastic person to join our hardworking team. You will work in our Year 3/4 class, on a temporary 12 month contract, with the possibility of extending further pending budgetary review.
We are seeking someone to primarily support the teachers in our Year 3/4 class and also support pupils in small groups outside of the class and on the yard, so we are seeking someone with the ability to also work across the lower Key Stages.
From September to March, the hours worked will be 31.25 hours, term-time and these will most likely continue to the end of the academic year, however as this is a variable hours contract, you could be required to work between 5.25 hours and 37 hours after April 2016 (pending budgetary review).
Essential: NVQ Level 2 in relevant discipline, NVQ Level 2 or equivalent in Maths/English, experience of working within a school setting and as an effective team member.
Interview date: 16 June 2015.

Interested candidates for both vacancies are welcome to visit the school on Wednesday 20 May at 2pm. Please call the school to confirm if you wish to attend. The posts you are applying for are covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Act 1975. If successful you will be required to apply to the Disclosure and Barring Service for a 'disclosure'.

Application forms can be downloaded online or can be requested from: recruitment@btlancashire.co.uk. Please quote the job reference number. Return to Lynne Ward in the school office.
Closing date for both posts: 29 May 2015.

Some schools are excluded as commitment is on an individual basis.

Lancashire County Council

Apply online at: **www.lancashire.gov.uk/vacancies**

1139880

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PRAYER

PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Never known to fail.

O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, faithful Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this necessity, O Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein you are my Mother, O Holy Mary Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succour me in my necessity.

(Make Request).

There are none that can withstand your powers. Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3 Times).

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in your hands (3 times).

Thank you for your mercy towards me and mine.

This prayer must be said for three days and after that the request will be granted and the prayer must be published. **J.P**

6108088

IN MEMORIAM

DORAN
Sheila

9th May 2015

Today we love you just as much as the day you passed away

Remembering you is easy,
I do it every day,
It's just the pain of losing you,
that never goes away.
When it comes to memories,
We have a lot to view,
To share this memoriam is now
all that we can do.
To show we are still together,
and all of us missing you,
The hole that was made the day
you went away cannot be filled
by anyone, that is true to say.
If one wish could be granted,
it would not be enough, But one
more smile or kiss from you,
that now would be enough.

I miss my Wife
I miss my Mum
We miss our Nan
Love forever
Bill, Stephen, Jane,
Jema and Ella
Good night and God Bless

6108088

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MILLS
Marion

22 March 2015

Elizabeth would like to express her sincere thanks to Fr Mark and all of the loyal parishioners of St Patricks for the beautiful and unforgettable Requiem Mass. Special thanks to Hilary, Jane and all the Nursing, Medical and Ancillary Staff on Ward 7B, Southport DGH, for their care to Marion during the last 3 months of her precious life. Also, my thanks to Dr Finnegan and her Palliative care team. I thank you all most sincerely for your unfailing support and kindness to myself and my family through such a sad and difficult time. My heartfelt thanks too, to all of Marion's dear friends both near and far who supported me through this very sad time. Thank you all so much. Holy Mass will be offered for you all at St Patricks, Churchtown.

6108113

DEATHS

Clark
David

24th April 2015
Aged 72 years

Passed away peacefully at home with his wife and son at his side. David will be greatly missed by all his family and friends.
Family flowers only by request but donations if desired to Queenscourt Hospice. Funeral service will take place at Lathom Park Chapel on Monday 11th May at 12.15 followed by committal at Southport Crematorium.
All enquiries to Hunters Funeral Directors, 128b Burscough Street, Ormskirk
Tel 01695 572997.

1139853

DEATHS

Johnson
Jimmy

On 28th April 2015 Jimmy Johnson passed away peacefully after a long period of dementia

Rest in peace Jimmy

Love Alice, Brian, Christine and Jean.

You will be in our hearts forever.

Thank you to all the girls and staff at Beaconview for making his last house so peaceful.

xxxx

45530

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THANKS

Jenny, Debs & Paul

would like to thank all relatives and friends for messages, cards and donations received for North West Air Ambulance in memory of Mr John Vickers.

Special thanks to Margaret and staff at Skelmersdale Funeral Services for making a very sad time easier to deal with.

45521

GARLICK
JANET

2nd May 2015
Aged 76 years

Wife of the late Philip, much loved mum of Philip and Adrian, mother-in-law to Jayne and Lesley, devoted nana to Penny, Daniel, Naomi and Natasha. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends.
Service at Christ Church, Lord Street on Tuesday 12th May at 1:45pm followed by committal at Southport Crematorium.
Colourful clothing would be appreciated. Family flowers only please but donations are being gratefully received for Myeloma UK.
Donations and enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 19a Banastre Road, Southport, PR8 5AW.
Telephone: 01704 500086.

1139986

Hall
Joan Winifred
(Nee Parker)

April 29th 2015

Aged 87 years

Beloved wife of Peter.

Requiem mass at St Marys Church, Little Crosby on Friday May 8th at 11.30am.

Interment following in the churchyard.

1139915

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1139121

DEATHS

Waterson
Barbara

1st May 2015

Peacefully at her home in Skelmersdale, aged 76 years

The dearly loved wife of Peter, loving mum of Martin (deceased), Helen and Claire and devoted grandma of Robert and Fiona.
Funeral service at St Helens Crematorium on Thursday 7th May 2015 at 12.30pm.
Family flowers only please, donations if desired for North West Cancer Research or The Donkey Sanctuary.
All enquiries to H Hardman & Co., Independent Family Funeral Directors of Skelmersdale. Tel 01695 722122/720012

1139976

WRIGHT
ERIC

28TH April 2015

Peacefully in Birch Abbey Care Home Southport aged 88 years.

Dearly beloved husband of the late Mary. A much loved and caring dad of Derek and Joyce. Dear father in law of Carol and Dave. Loving grandad of Daniel, Gemma, Craig, Adam, Ryan and Matthew. Loving brother of Cliff, Keith and the late Ken.
Eric will be deeply missed by all his family and many friends.
Funeral service to take place at St John the Baptist Church Burscough on Monday 11th May 2015 at 11.30am followed by committal at Southport Crematorium at 12.40pm.
Family flowers only by request, donations if so desired are being gratefully received by the family on behalf of Cancer Research UK and the Alzheimer's Society. Further enquires please to Cookson Tyrer Funeral Directors Burscough Tel: 01704 897770

1139969

STOTT
RUTH

28th April 2015

Aged 82 years

Beloved wife of the late Sidney, much loved mum of Timothy and Jeremy, dear grandmother to all her grand-children.

A Service of Thanksgiving will be held at Liverpool Road Methodist Church on Friday 8th May at 10:30 hours. Donations are being gratefully received in lieu of flowers for Alzheimers Research UK.

Donations and enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 19a Banastre Road, Southport, PR8 5AW. Telephone: 01704 500086.

1139943

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PUBLIC NOTICES

West Lancashire Borough Council
Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 - Article 15

APPLICATION(S) FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Application No: 2015/0357/COU Change of use from Shop to Italian Hot food Takeaway. To be converted to "Mammas Pizza and Pasta House" at Queenscourt Hospice, 70 Liverpool Road North, Burscough.

Application No: 2015/0371/COU Retention of siting of a mobile home for use as a temporary agricultural workers dwelling at Eastwood Farm, Narrow Lane, Halsall.

This does not (or may not) accord with the development plan.

Application No: 2015/0374/FUL Demolition of swimming pool / conservatory / summer room / double garage and outbuildings. Conversion of front games room into garage and erection of single storey bungalow within the rear garden of the property at 3 Cut Lane, Aughton.

This does not (or may not) accord with the development plan.

Application No: 2015/0378/FUL Extension to existing industrial unit following demolition of existing dwelling. Incorporation of land into existing haulage yard at School House Farm, Tollgate Road, Burscough.

Application No: 2015/0409/FUL Variation of Condition No.2 imposed on planning permission 2011/1094/FUL to allow inclusion of plan reference 223F and GAS01 received by the Local Planning Authority on 21/04/2015, and to omit plan reference 101A received on 30/06/2008 at Throstles Nest Farm, Pippin Street, Burscough.

APPLICATION(S) AFFECTING A CONSERVATION AREA / LISTED BUILDING

Application No: 2015/0238/FUL The conversion of the stone built barns into residential use to form two semi-detached dwellings, and the replacement of the existing hay barn with two detached double garages. Access to the dwellings is to be provided from an existing gated field access to the east of the site from Lees Lane at Barn East Of, Lower House Farm, Lees Lane, Dalton.

The applications are available for viewing on the Council's web site www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning. Alternatively, the application can be viewed during normal office hours at 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk and at 1st Floor, The Concourse, Skelmersdale. If you wish to comment on the proposal you can do so via the Council's web site, by e.mail to plan.apps@westlancs.gov.uk or in writing to the Planning Division, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, but these must be received within 21 days of the date of this notice quoting the application no. Any comments made will be available for public inspection.

In the event that an appeal is made against a decision of the Council to refuse to grant planning permission for the proposed development, and that appeal then proceeds by way of the expedited procedure under the written representations procedure, any representations made to the Council about an application will be passed to the Secretary of State and there will be no opportunity to make further representations.

John R Harrison DipEnvP., MRTPI
Assistant Director Planning

Dated: 6th May 2015
PDNOT841

1139982

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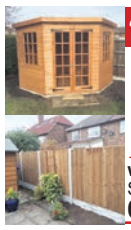

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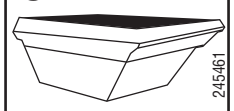

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Life On Cars
DAVID SIMISTER

I ENJOYED a brief but brilliant bit of petrolhead bonding the other day.

Heading home over the M62 I got overtaken by a chap in an E30 BMW M3 and – as a sort of way of doffing my automotive cap – I gave him the thumbs up.

He looked back, gave me a knowing glance, and gave me the thumbs up in return. It was a fleeting moment of automotive 'anorakness' between two guys who've never met – we both know the E30 M3 is a truly brilliant bit of kit.

My M3–driving mate will doubtless know something else – that all BMWs worth their salt have an inherent goodness. It's an emphasis on driving enjoyment, build quality and somehow feeling very firm and focused, even though it costs a little more than normal to achieve it – let's call it BMWness.

I went looking for it on the couple of occasions I've borrowed an X1 – the smallest of the German giant's quartet of sporty off–roaders – and found it weirdly wanting on the BMWness front.

It's roomy, quiet and relaxing to drive on a long run, but this X–badged car just didn't seem to have the BMW X factor, and always seemed to feel a bit dimwitted in the situations other BMWs – including its bigger brother, the X3 – revel in. M3 Man would have hated it.

Happily, you don't have to go far if you're hunting for 'BMWness' – in fact, you'll only have to wander a couple of feet across the varnished glimmer of your nearest BMW showroom.

For roughly the same sort of money as the X1, you can have a 3–series with the same 2.0–litre diesel engine as the one I've been trying.

Yes, I know that BMW isn't importing the four–wheel–drive 3–series you can get on the continent and that the X1's a tad more practical, but unless you live up a farm track I'd honestly go for the smaller saloon (or its Touring–badged estate sibling).

The 3–series is a proper BMW, and whether you go for the entry–level 316 or the modern day M3 you'll still get that inherent BMWness. It does all the things you'd expect a modern day family saloon to do, but there's something about its informative steering, the attention to detail with the build quality and the way the tyres, the suspension and the traction control team up in every corner that lets you know someone in Munich has given this car some real thought. It even looks good too, in a snouty, aggressive sort of way.

The 3–series is really very good indeed. No wonder it is by far the company's biggest–selling model.

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Motors

The Galaxy is substantially larger than the Ford S–Max people carrier Code NA

Four wheeled Galaxy launches

By David Simister

THE new Ford Galaxy will be sold with four–wheel–drive for the first time in the model's history.

The seven–seater people carrier joins the Kuga, S–Max, Mondeo and Edge in being made available with the system, which automatically sends grip to the wheel with the most grip in slippy conditions.

The new Galaxy range – which also includes front–wheel–drive versions – starts at £26,445.

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62	SMART FORTWO, 1.0 PETROL, 5000 miles, 1 owner, FSH, white	£5995	£128
61	TOYOTA AYGO GO! 1.0 PETROL, FDSH, 37k, 1 owner, grey	£5995	£128
09	KIA CEED 1.6 AUTO 5-DR, 30k, blue, FSH, 2 Keys	£5495	£104
57	KIA CEED ESTATE 1.6 PETROL, FSH, black, 61k	£5995	£125
57	FIAT PUNTO 1.4 AUTO PETROL, 55k , purple, recently serviced	£3095	£64
04	FORD MONDEO 2.0 DIESEL AUTO, 61k , dealer service history	£2795	
Y	HONDA CIVIC 1.6, FSH, silver, 86k	£1995	
H	NISMO 300 ZX 3.2 TWIN TURBO, 440 bhp, FSH, black, 70k	£9995	
07	BMW X3 DIESEL, 51k, FSH, 12 mths MOT, 12 mths warranty, FSH. mint!	£9995	
60	VW POLO 1.2 PETROL, in black, excellent condition, 12 mths MOT, 19k	£6995	£148
12	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 PETROL 5-DR, FDSH, silver, fantastic cond.	SOLD	
60	VAUXHALL INSIGNIA 2.0 SRI DIESEL, 1 prev owner, 94k	£6495	£143
09	FIAT 500, 1.2 PETROL, 3DR, 29k, 1 prev owner, 2 keys, FSH, white	£5995	£128
61	HYUNDAI IIO 1.2 PETROL, FDSH, 6K only, 1 owner, silver	£5995	£128
10	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.4 5-DR PETROL, 22k, FSH, blue	£5795	£123
W	MGF 1.8 PETROL (75th Anniversary Ltd Edition), 70k, FSH	£5495	
10	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.3 DIESEL, black, 65k	£5195	£109
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11	FIAT PANDA 1.2 PETROL, 1 owner, 25k, FSH, in light blue	£4295	£90
07	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 SXI 3-DR PETROL, 47k, red, mint	£3895	£101
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57	VW FOX 1.4 PETROL, 57k, s/history, in silver	SOLD	
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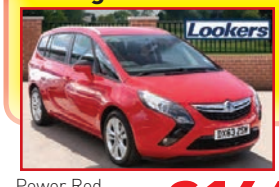

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Power Red, 16450 Miles

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• 58000 Miles
• FSH
• CD player

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• New Model
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• FSH
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• Alloys
• Air Con
• FSH

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• 1 Owner
• FSH
• Alloys
• Air Con

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09 Lexus Is220 Diesel Se

• 65000 Miles
• FSH
• Alloys
• Air Con

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• 33000 Miles
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• FSH
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• Alloys
• Air Con

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• 52000 Miles
• FSH
• Alloys
• Air Con

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• 1 Owner
• FSH
• Alloys
• Air Con

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• 1 Owner
• 39000 Miles
• FSH
• Alloys

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• FSH
• Alloys
• Priv Glass
• 43000 Miles

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• 44000 Miles
• 1 Owner
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• 1 Owner
• Leather
• FSH
• Sat Nav

NO DEPOSIT

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60 Ford Kuga 2.0 Tdci

• 1 Owner
• 59000 Miles
• FSH
• Priv Glass

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62 Audi A3 1.6 Tdi Sport 5 Dr

• Alloys
• FSH
• Air Con
• CD Player

NO DEPOSIT

NO DEPOSIT

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60 Mercedes C220 Cdi Sport Auto 4 Dr

• Leather
• Alloys
• FSH
• CD Player

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11 Jaguar Xf 3.0 Diesel Luxury

• 1 Owner
• FSH
• Sat Nav
• Alloys

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• FSH
• Alloys
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£17,750

• 10 REG •

Peugeot RCZ 1.6 THP GT 2dr Dolphin Blue, black leather, huge spec black pack (roof arches, alloys, grille and mirrors),19" solstice alloys, electric & heated seats, 25898 miles

£11,495

• 14 REG •

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£14,950

• 15 REG •

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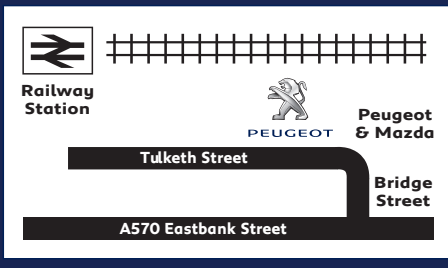

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VAUXHALL

Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO2 emissions (g/km). Vauxhall range: Urban: 14.4 (19.6) - 67.3 (4.2). Extra-urban: 27.4 (10.3) - 91.1 (3.1). Combined: 20.6 (13.7) - 80.7 (3.5). CO2 emissions: 324 - 94g/km. Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors.

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Grey 18487 Miles 20" Alloys, VXR Pack, Sat Nav, Bluetooth
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White, 5500 Miles
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Carbon Flash, 32389 Miles
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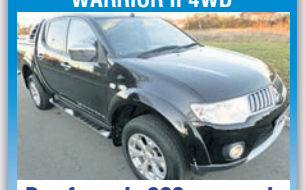

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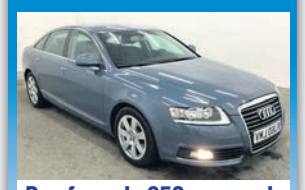

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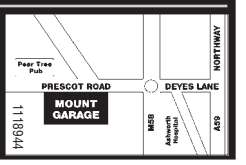

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Ormskirk League round–up

Platinum Menswear 0 Falcon 0
This was a rare goalless draw in an encounter that has produced plenty of goals in the past. Both defences held out for a deserved clean sheet though.
Melling Vics 1 The Tail 3
Tail get their championship charge back on track with an impressive result against double cup winners Melling Vics.
Georges 1 Sacred Heart 1
Sacred Heart started the better in this game and saw their early dominance rewarded with a close range finish that gave the George's keeper little chance. Sacred continued to have the lion's share of possession and would have been disappointed not to have sealed the win before half time.

Georges though came out a different team for the second period and dominated possession and chances. When it came, the equalizer was outstanding. After controlling along through ball vert well, Danny Dunleavy caught the Sacred Heart keeper out with a brilliant lob. The goalscorer went on to terrorize the opposition defence with his pace but Georges, similar to Heart in the first half, couldn't make the chances pay.

Hard work earns Storm victory

TARELETON–based Southport Storm earned their second victory of the season on Saturday when they beat Accrington Panthers 18–16. A club official said: "This victory came from a lot of hard work in training and Southport's belief and team spirit." Storm are at home to Folly Lane on Saturday.

Burscough sneak home to make it two wins in two with fine all round display

LAST weekend's fixtures in the Liverpool & District Cricket Competition were ruined by the weather, with only two of our local clubs able to complete their matches.

In the Premier Division, Ormskirk won the toss and asked Rainhill to bat at Brook Lane, the visitors had made 43–0 off 11 overs when the rain arrived with Tyler McGladdery unbeaten on 33.*

Northern won the toss at Leigh and had the hosts 48–3 off 15 overs when rain stopped play for the day, with Stephen Cole taking 2–18.

In the Second Division, Burscough made it two wins out of two, with a two wicket win at Sutton, where the hosts were put in to bat and declared after 55 overs on 172–8, with skipper Adam Onion 62 and Gary Greener 46 leading the way with the bat, whilst Lee Berrie weighed in with 4–64 with the ball.

In reply, a good all round batting display from Alan Murray 42, Matthew Wright 27, Brendan Domigan 25, Ryan Hughes 20 and an undefeated 19* from skipper Rob Glaysher led the visitors to victory on 173–8 off 46.1 overs.

In the First Division Maghull also made it two wins out of two with a one wicket home win over Rainford.

The visitors chose to bat first and managed to put 175 up on the board, thanks to 46 from Saad Khan, 34 from Matthew Bailey and 26 from Mark Brook, with Jack Snowdon 6–47 and Ryan Swiers 3–53 in fine form with the ball.

In reply, opener Paul Walters led from the front with an unbeaten 68*.

And, despite a middle order collapse, Jack Snowdon 33 backed him up superbly in an 82 run partnership that paved the way for the hosts to reach 177–9 and clinch a very tight contest.

This weekend's local LDCC fixtures: Formby v Highfield, Northern v Wallasey, Maghull v Colwyn Bay, Newton le Willows v Ainsdale, St Helens v Fleetwood Hesketh, Burscough v Parkfield Liscard and Old Xaverians v Hightown St Mary's.

Bootle now face three games in four days, starting with a National T20 tie against Liverpool at Wadham Road on Thursday (6pm) followed by a trip to Leigh on Saturday in the Premier League and a home match against Ormskirk in the Royal London Cup on Sunday (1pm).

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Fans showed their loyalty in rollercoaster season for Skem

IT has been a bit of a rollercoaster season for Skelmersdale United supporters but one which in many ways has seen them show how much they think of manager Tommy Lawson, *writes Neil Leatherbarrow*.

The season started on a high from early September, then hit a downward path in the New Year, before finishing with the club back in the ascendancy culminating with some silverware and real cause for optimism next season.

Finishing August undefeated including two away victories signalled another good start to the season.

The run continued into September, progress was made in the FA Cup before a first defeat in rather controversial circumstances at Curzon Ashton and the 'Watergate' row that followed over the watering of the pitch at the Tameside Stadium.

The month didn't finish superbly, but an FA Cup exit at the hands of Blyth Spartans didn't look all that bad when the Northumberland side went all the way to the third round in January.

The first six league games in October brought five victories including a memorable success away to eventual champions FC United of Manchester thanks to a late Aidan Kirkbride header, the run also saw Tommy's men draw at Blyth Spartans.

By the end of the month, Skelmersdale were in top spot in the Evo–Stik Premier Division table, a position they were not to relinquish until mid–February.

Undefeated in four out of five games in November meant that the league's yellow jersey was retained.

Five league games in December brought three wins and two losses, one leaving a rather nasty taste after the way the players were treated on a first ever visit to Halesowen Town.

The weather in January brought a couple of blank Saturday's but two more away wins. However, they were not the main story for Skelmersdale United as it emerged in the middle of the month that Tommy Lawson was going to have to reduce his wage bill and maybe even release most of his players as for a brief period the whole future of the club was in the balance.

Tommy Lawson with the Liverpool Senior Cup. Picture by Jackson Images.

Enter the supporters and the town itself, which rallied round Tommy and allowed him to keep most of his squad together. Collections were held, companies made donations and main sponsor Messenger Express made a tremendous contribution, just showing the esteem that Tommy Lawson has among the people of Skelmersdale.

Not surprisingly under the circumstances February was not a great month for Skelmersdale and they slipped off the leading position in the table, but significantly attendances didn't fall and the support for Tommy Lawson and his players continued to flow in.

One of the things that will always be remembered was the amount of ordinary people who put their hands into their pockets for various fundraising schemes to keep Lawson's players.

It has all culminated in a wall that will show the names of many who helped in "the hour of need" forever in the club's history.

March saw one win and one draw from four league games, plus one magnificent performance as Skem beat Conference club Southport 5–0 at Haig Avenue in the semi–final of the Liverpool Senior Cup.

The season finished strongly.

Champions elect FC United were beaten at Stormy Corner, to become the only club in the league who could boast of doing the double over FC United.

Then the Liverpool Senior Cup was lifted on a day of goals against AFC Liverpool, before a last day success left Skelmersdale in seventh position in the table.

More importantly though, it let Tommy Lawson know the level of loyalty that the supporters have for him and it left Skelmersdale looking forward to next season with tangible positivity.

• Skelmersdale United hold their presentation evening on Friday (May 8) at the Social Club on the ground, starting at 7.30pm. Entertainment will be provided by local singer Paul McCoy. Tickets are free.

Call 01695 722123 or any club official.

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SKELMERSDALE
Champion

6 May 2015 Vol 22 • Issue 19 www.champnews.com

This week's Champion is inside ...

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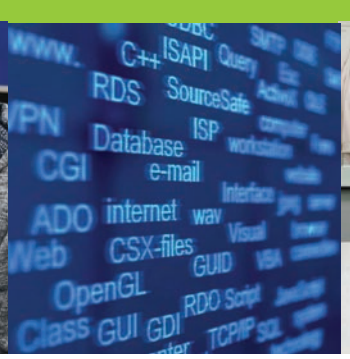

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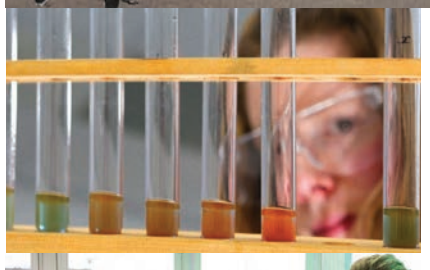

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The new SEIC will house the College's Science and Engineering 'Career Degrees' and supports the College's aim to revolutionise the employability of students in the region. The centre has been made a reality through funding from the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) who play a crucial role in maximising job creation and economic growth in the county.

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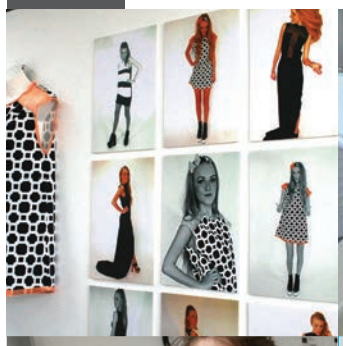
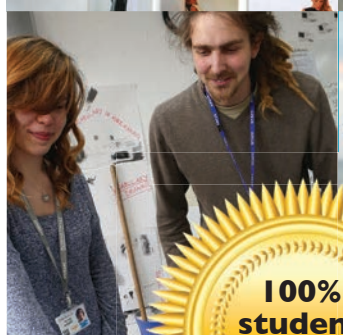
  includes careers in a range of settings such as nursing, family support, social work, youth work, health care, residential and day care.
- **Sport...**
  offers careers in the leisure, sport and recreation industries including sports analysis, coaching, sports development, teaching, activity leadership, personal training, biomechanics, nutrition and sports therapy.
- **Social Sciences: Criminology, Psychology & Sociology...**
  opens up opportunities in areas such as the criminal justice system; welfare services; the police, prison and probation services; youth and community work.

Open Event
Wed 13th May 2015
4-7pm, Euxton Lane,
Chorley, PR7 6AQ



Foundation Diploma
Art & Design



This one year course bridges the gap between College/6th Form and university studies. It enables you to create a substantial art portfolio to support progression to university or employment. The course is project-based, allowing experimentation with different media/materials and providing the opportunity to explore in more detail an area of particular interest.

Places are filling fast! Call us today or visit our Open Event.

Closer than you think!

Our Chorley Campus (on Euxton Lane) is easy to find, close to major motorway networks and offers extensive free car parking. It is also accessible by rail and bus, with the Buckshaw Parkway railway station and bus stops adjacent to the campus.

Runshaw College | Euxton Lane | Chorley | PR7 6AQ | 01772 642040 | justask@runshaw.ac.uk | www.runshaw.ac.uk